Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Daily Report
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Arab-Israeli Talks

Israeli, Palestinian Negotiators Meet in Jericho

'Urayqat, Singer Hold News Conference

JN2603172295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Today, Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government, met with Yo'el Singer, head of the Israeli side to the negotiations on Palestinian elections, in Jericho. They discussed details concerning Palestinian elections which will take place after Israeli forces are redeployed outside Palestinian areas in the West Bank. Our colleague Kamal 'Alawinah gave us details in the following report:

[Begin recording] ['Alawinah] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government in the National Authority, met with Yo'el Singer, the Israeli Foreign Ministry adviser and head of the Israeli side to the Cairo negotiations, at the Ministry of Local Government in Jericho today. The Palestinian and Israeli sides discussed Palestinian legislative elections, the structure of the Palestinian legislative council, and technical aspects which the Palestinian side needs to address in order to hold elections after Israeli forces are redeployed outside inhabited Palestinian areas in the West Bank.

After the meeting, which lasted about three hours, Dr. 'Urayqat and Mr. Singer held a news conference in which they reviewed the issues they had discussed. Both sides noted that the new round of negotiations will begin in Cairo on Tuesday [28 March] to discuss the issue of Palestinian elections.

During the news conference, Dr. 'Sa'ib 'Urayqat said:

['Urayqat] At this morning's meeting in Jericho, we welcomed Mr. Singer. As you know, we hold preparatory meetings between rounds. The official round of talks will be held in Cairo on Tuesday and Wednesday. We agreed that during that meeting we will complete the joint formula which was begun during the last round. As you know, that round witnessed a very new development—that is the stage of joint formulas—13 months after negotiating papers [awraq tafawudiyah] were exchanged. We will continue to discuss the structure of the Palestinian legislative council.

Moreover, today, we discussed technical preparatory issues, especially those we need in the areas that are still under Israeli occupation. [end recording]

'Urayqat: Talks Reach Practical Stage

TA2603171395 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Yo'el Singer and Sa'ib 'Urayqat, heads of the Israeli and Palestinian delegations discussing elections in the territories, met in Jericho today. After the meeting it was disclosed that the sides are still divided over several issues, such as the size of the Palestinian legislative council and the right of Jerusalem residents to run for office. Our correspondent Hanan Schlein reports:

[Begin Schlein recording] Even if at the end of today's meeting in Jericho the two sides reacted favorably, two central issues are still in dispute. Sa'ib 'Urayqat pointed out the significance of the fact that some understandings were achieved. He said the sides reviewed certain issues and will continue to discuss them in Cairo on 28 March. 'Urayqat attributed great significance to the fact that, after 13 months of exchanging papers, the sides moved on to a more practical stage.

Yo'el Singer also sounded optimistic. He believes that the two sides will reach an agreement on the elections by 1 July. Singer is convinced the elections will be held in the near future. At the end of today's meeting, he noted that, in their Erez checkpoint meeting, Chairman 'Arafat and Foreign Minister Peres determined a target date for wrapping up the talks and that the two sides are doing everything possible to stick to this date. Singer added that the two sides reached an understanding regarding the makeup of the observers teams. Singer said that all the countries proposed by the Palestinians are acceptable to Israel.

The two issues on which Israel and the PLO are still divided are the size of the Palestinian legislative council and the Palestinian demand to permit East Jerusalem residents to be elected to this council. These issues will apparently remain unsolved even after the Cairo meeting on 28 March. [end recording]

'Urayqat on Elections' Importance

JN2603201895 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1830 GMT 26 mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Local Government Minister Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat has said that the Oslo and Cairo agreements will fail if an agreement to hold legislative elections in the Palestinian territories is not reached before 1 July. He made this statement today, following a meeting with Yo'el Singer, Israeli Foreign Ministry legal adviser, in Jericho. The meeting was held within the framework of preparatory talks on the Palestinian legislative elections.

Singer said that Israel will not interfere in the elections and is, as the Israeli official put it, only interested in the security issues related to these elections.

The Palestinian and Israeli sides will hold another meeting in Cairo the day after tomorrow, Tuesday.

Phased Withdrawal Said Accepted in 'Secret' Talks

TA2403202195 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 24 Mar 95

[Political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen video report]

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[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinians have agreed to a phased IDF [Israel Defense Forces] withdrawal from Arab population centers in the West Bank. This was confirmed this evening by Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir. In secret contacts held recently, there were also initial signs of agreement to a partial IDF withdrawal. Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen spoke with Mr. Savir this evening:

[Begin Savir recording] We are talking about two things: a phased process, with the first stage taking place on the eve of the elections. After the elections are held and the council is formed, there will be additional stages before the IDF redeploys in specific locations in accordance with our security needs, which include external security, security for our settlements, security for Israeli citizens, and clearly, of course, security for Israel. [end recording]

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League 'Regrets' Turkish Incursion Into Iraq

NC2603154295 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Arab League has expressed regrets over the Turkish forces' incursion over the borders of the Republic of Iraq using air and land forces. It also regrets the victims among the innocent Iraqi citizens as a result of this incursion.

This is included in a statement the Arab League issued today. It says that the League is following with great concern the events on the Iraqi-Turkish border, and that it sees this invasion as a violation of the basic principles of international law and the relevant international resolutions.

The Arab League Secretariat confirmed that it fully supports the unity and security of Iraq's territory and stands alongside fraternal Iraq in defending its sovereignty and regional unity. The Arab League called on the Turkish Government not to escalate the situation further but to withdraw from Iraqi territory.

Islamic Affairs

OIC Secretary General on Talks With Gore

LD2303154195 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1249 GMT 23 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh, 23 Mar, (KUNA)—U.S. Vice President Al Gore said the issue of the threats posed by Iraq and Iran in the region was the subject of discussion during his meeting last night with King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, servant of the two holy places.

That came in a joint news conference held here today by Al Gore and Dr. Hamid Algabid, secretary general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference [OIC], at the end of the meeting, which was held between them at the end of Gore's first visit to Saudi Arabia within his current Middle Eastern tour. [passage omitted]

In a speech he delivered at the beginning of the news conference, Algabid pointed out that during his meeting with Al Gore he discussed a number of issues of concern to the Islamic nation and clarified the position of the OIC regarding these issues.

He stressed that the organization firmly opposed extremism, pointing out that during their last summit in Casablanca, the leaders of the Islamic countries had announced once again condemnation against all forms of terrorism, including state terrorism.

He explained that Islam rejected terrorism, because it violated Islamic teachings and values.

Regarding Iraq, Algabid said the organization had expressed "satisfaction over Iraq's recognition of the sovereignty of Kuwait, the integrity of its territories, its political independence, and international borders, urging Iraq to continue to implement its international obligations."

Algabid added that he had explained to the U.S. Vice President the point of view of the Islamic world represented in the OIC regarding the issues facing the Muslims worldwide.

In this respect, Algabid called on the United States and United Nations to support Muslims' issues, "to carry out truth, freedom, justice values spread by the main religions, ethics and international conventions."

Within this context, he pointed out the Serbian aggression on Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the peace issue in the Middle East, the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir, the civil war in Afghanistan, the situation in Chechnya, the Lockerbie issue, and the Armenian aggression on Azerbaijan. [passage omitted]

OIC Urges New Delhi To Lift Siege of Islamic Holy Places

LD2203224395 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1800 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Jeddah, 22 Mar—Dr. Hamid Algabid, secretary general of the Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC], met his excellency Sardar Mohammad Abdul Qayyum Khan, prime minister of the independent Jammu and Kashmir, at his office at the organization's headquarters in Jeddah today.

His Excellency Qayyum briefed the secretary general about the latest developments in Jammu and Kashmir and expressed deep concern over the siege imposed by the Indian Army on the Islamic holy places in the town of Sharar Sharif [name as received].

Mr. Qayyum appealed to the OIC secretary general, the Islamic community, and the whole world to use their influence with India to lift its siege, stop the persecution

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of the population, and stop violating the rights of the Kashmiri people that were liable to hinder the peaceful settlement through negotiations in accordance with the UN resolutions and the resolutions issued by the OIC's 7th summit held in Casablanca.

The OIC secretary general expressed sympathy with the Kashmiri people, and urged the Indian Government to lift the siege imposed on the holy places in Sharar Sharif town and to cooperate in order to achieve a peaceful settlement through negotiations.

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 14 Mar

NC2103125795

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 14 March edition of the Arabic-language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Writer Claims Western Plan Against Islamists in North Africa
2. Report Snubs Mufti's Readiness To Visit Israel
3. Islamic Figures Address Jerusalem Seminar in Cairo
4. Nationalists Protest Israeli Participation in Cairo Fair
5. Saudi, Egyptian Ulema View Peace With Israel
6. Islamic Writer Views Goals of Christopher's Tour
7. Islamic Writer Notes Goals of Islamic Trend

WRITER CLAIMS WESTERN PLAN AGAINST ISLAMISTS IN NORTH AFRICA

In a 300-word report on page 1, Mahmud Barki claims that the United States and a number of European nations have drawn up a joint military plan to interfere in any north African country should the Islamic fundamentalists take power.

REPORT SNUBS MUFTI'S READINESS TO VISIT ISRAEL

A 150-word report on page one notes an interview that Egypt's Mufti Shaykh Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi gave to the newspaper AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in which he expresses readiness to visit Israel and meet with Israeli leaders if this "would benefit the nation." The report says that in an attempt to lessen the repercussions of this "serious trend" Mufti Tantawi says that he has not received an invitation from Israel but that if "Palestinian President 'Arafat invites me to visit Jerusalem, I would welcome it." The report says that Mufti Tantawi is falsifying the facts as he realizes that 'Arafat has no power in Jerusalem or anywhere else in the Palestinian territory. The report notes that while Tantawi has more than once expressed readiness to visit Israel, al-Azhar rector Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq adopts "a marvelous stance" refusing to visit Israel which he considers to be "an evil and unreliable neighbor."

ISLAMIC FIGURES ADDRESS JERUSALEM SEMINAR IN CAIRO

A 1,200-word report by 'Abd-al-Hayy Muhammad on pages 1 and 6 elaborates on the Jerusalem seminar held in Cairo on 12 March organized by the General Secretariat of the Organization of the Islamic Conference [OIC] and the Arab League General Secretariat. Al-Azhar Rector Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq, Coptic Pope Shanudah and some 600 Islamic and Christian personalities attended the seminar. They called for confronting the Zionist attempts to judaize Jerusalem. They stressed that the current peace talks only "served the Zionist aggressive policies to obliterate the Islamic character of the city" and called on the governments and peoples of the Islamic world to do all they can to regain Jerusalem.

Addressing the seminar, Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq calls for drawing up a plan to restore Jerusalem. He stresses that the Muslims must not be slow in their efforts to regain Jerusalem despite their crises and predicaments. He maintains that the only fair solution entails returning Jerusalem to the Muslims and that that goal "cannot be achieved through peace with the Israelis because they bear a grudge against Muslims and their sanctities." He spells out practical steps that the Muslims should take to attain this goal.

Speaking at the seminar, Pope Shanudah says that as men of religion we believe that the Israeli existence in Palestine is against right and justice and the UN Security Council resolutions. He says the Christians want real peace and not peace at the expense of one party, stressing that real peace does not consist of subjugating the Palestinians to peace nor his imposing military power.

OIC Secretary General Hamid Algabid said that Jerusalem is the central issue of the Islamic nation and is the key to a permanent and comprehensive peace in the region. He argues that the continuing building of settlements around Jerusalem is aimed at ending the Arab and Islamic presence in Jerusalem. He says that the Israeli policy has not changed after the Oslo agreement, noting its repressive measures against the Palestinians and its insistence on retaining its nuclear arsenal.

Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid says the Israeli measures are aimed at judaizing Jerusalem and obliterating its Arab and Islamic character in defiance of the international community. He says that Jerusalem is the crux of the Palestinian issue and that without a fair settlement of this issue there will be no comprehensive and permanent peace in the region.

NATIONALISTS PROTEST ISRAELI PARTICIPATION IN CAIRO FAIR

A 400-word report on pages 1 and 6 signed by dozens of Egyptian thinkers, writers, and Islamic figures notes that they addressed an appeal to the Egyptian people over Israel's participation in the Cairo International Industrial and Agricultural Fair. They describe the Egyptian

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Government's permission for Israel's participation this year as an "extreme provocation" of the Egyptian and Arab feelings and national interests at a time when Israel unmasks its ugly face that cannot be concealed by the feeble reconciliation between certain Arabs and Israel. The appeal notes that Israel is still beating the drums of war, insisting on retaining its nuclear arsenal, expanding settlements in the Arab land, and violating the Islamic and Christian sanctities. The appeal notes that the popular movement for the Resistance of Zionism and the Boycott of Israel expresses the national conscience which rejects Israeli domination. The appeal urges the masses and all professional associations to besiege the Israeli representation at the fair and isolate the collaborators with the Israeli enemy.

SAUDI, EGYPTIAN ULEMA VIEW PEACE WITH ISRAEL

In a 3,500-word dispatch from Doha on page 3 by Hasan Daba, the paper publishes a reply by Saudi Arabia's mufti, Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Aziz Bin-Baz, to a comment by Egyptian religious scholar Shaykh Yusuf al-Qardawi. Al-Qardawi was writing in response to an earlier religious ruling by Bin-Baz on peace with Israel. The views of both scholars were published in Qatari and Kuwaiti papers. Bin-Baz defends his view that peace with Israel is admissible, citing Koranic verses to this effect and basing his remarks on the grounds of Prophet Muhammad's reconciliation with the Quraysh clan despite the clan's oppression and eviction of the prophet's supporters. He argues that Prophet Muhammad reconciled with the Quraysh clan because it was in the general interest of the people. So, he claims, if the Palestinians see an interest in peace with Israel, they should have peace, because it is better to have part of Palestine than to have nothing at all. He cites Koranic verses to support his position, most notably the verse that former President Anwar al-Sadat often cited to justify his peace overture to Israel: "But if the enemy incline toward peace, do thou also incline toward peace, and trust in God: For he is the one that heareth and knoweth all things."

Shaykh al-Qardawi differs with Shaykh Bin-Baz, saying: The text of verses must consider the realities. He argues that when Prophet Muhammad reconciled with the Quraysh clan the clan was not a foreign body, but an Arab clan and part of the system. Regarding an inclination toward peace, he says Israel is not inclined toward peace. The Israelis usurped the land by force, dispersed its population, and established a racist state on it. A usurper cannot be considered to be inclined toward peace unless he returns the land to its owners. He notes that at the time al-Sadat made his move all the Arab countries boycotted him and considered him a traitor. Al-Qardawi says he believes the situation has not changed and stresses that Arafat's agreement with Israel is "worse" than al-Sadat's. He asks: How can we consider the party that continues to build settlements on Arab land and insists on retaining nuclear weapons to want peace?

ISLAMIC WRITER VIEWS GOALS OF CHRISTOPHER'S TOUR

In a 700-word column entitled "We Will Not Relinquish Our Dignity, Pride, or Our Will Under Any Pressure" on page 5, Islamic writer Mustafa Mashhur notes that the Arab and Islamic countries are coming under U.S. and Zionist pressure to achieve the Zionist enemy's interests. He says that U.S. Secretary of State Christopher's tour aims at achieving this goal and making the Arab cordon states sign the so-called peace agreements. These are "surrender," not peace agreements, he argues. He claims that Christopher is pressuring Egypt and the Arab countries to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Hailing Egypt's position of linking its signing of the nuclear treaty with Israel's signing, he says he hopes the formation of an advisory committee to study the position on the nuclear issue "will not lead to softening Cairo's stance on the issue." He claims that the Egyptian nuclear program was liquidated under U.S. and Zionist pressure and that the series of capitulation began with the Camp David Accords and continued with the "humiliating" Oslo Agreement and Jordan's agreement with Israel under U.S. "temptation" to cancel its debts. He maintains that the United States and Israel are now turning their pressure toward Lebanon and Syria to sign such agreements.

ISLAMIC WRITER NOTES GOALS OF ISLAMIC TREND

In his 500-word column on the back page, Islamic writer Muhammad 'Abd-al-Quddus asserts that religious rule in Egypt is rejected and that the goal of the Islamic trend is to establish "civil Islamic rule." He states that the Islamic trend aims to apply Islamic shari'ah through democratic means "after driving out" the ruling party through free elections, not violence. He maintains that every party or group has a right to seek power as long as this takes place through free elections and peaceful means, and not by force. President Mubarak's rule, he claims, has witnessed "unprecedented" acts of violence and failed to control prices, adding that corruption is rife and its "bases are firmly established." He says the seeming stability is "inertia" imposed by force, the emergency law, and the violation of human rights. He says: We want a rule based on the people's love, not imposed on the people, who cannot change it.

Political Islam Review: AL-NUR 15 Mar

NC2103153995

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 15 March edition of the Arabic-language newspaper AL-NUR that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Ulemas Accuse Education Ministry of Promoting Sex, Pornography

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2. Israel To Show the Film 'The Immigrant' Gratis to the Public
3. Paper Accuses Social Development Summit of Defying Muslims
4. Teachers Reportedly Moved to Administrative Posts for Religious Reasons

ULEMAS ACCUSE EDUCATION MINISTRY OF PROMOTING SEX, PORNOGRAPHY

A 300-word report on page 1 says that "Islamic ulemas have affirmed that the Ministry of Education is promoting sex and pornography and is attacking Islamic values through the books and magazines the General Egyptian Book Council publishes." The ulemas note that such publications increase the level of violence and extremism among the youths. The ulemas asked that Islamic restrictions be applied when discussing sexual matters, and that education be linked to religion. The report attributes the wide-spread availability on the market of various publications on sex- related issues to "a number of suspect international conferences, foremost of which was the International Conference on Population and Development which convened in Cairo last year," and one of whose recommendations was that sex education is every citizen's right.

ISRAEL TO SHOW THE FILM 'THE IMMIGRANT' GRATIS TO THE PUBLIC

Another 200-word report on page 1 by Majdi Daghir notes that Israel will be showing the film "The Immigrant" to the public for one whole week gratis. The report adds that the film was banned in Egypt. The report accuses the producer, Yusuf Shahin, of giving Israel a free copy of the film and asking it to show it to the public.

PAPER ACCUSES SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT OF DEFYING MUSLIMS

A third 200-word report on page 1 by Rajab al-Damanhuri accuses the world summit for social development, which was recently held in Copenhagen, of defying the sentiments of Muslims around the world, as did the International Conference for Population and Development in Cairo. The report then refers to certain paragraphs of the Copenhagen summit's recommendations which contained many vague phrases on women's affairs. AL-NUR, on its part, affirms that it does not oppose women's rights. It believes, it says, that women have a noble and respectable status in society which Islam has granted them.

TEACHERS REPORTEDLY MOVED TO ADMINISTRATIVE POSTS FOR RELIGIOUS REASONS

An approximately 3,000-word report on page 3 discusses a recent measure by the Ministry of Education to move teachers from various teaching positions into administrative positions at schools in remote governorates. The report gives various examples of teachers who have been moved and quotes statements from them about their experiences. Some of these teachers claim to have been moved for asking female students to wear head scarves, others for giving extra lessons in the Koran, and yet others for calling on students to perform their midday prayers. The report points to the minister of education as being primarily responsible for these moves. Not only does he move excellent teachers from teaching positions to administrative positions, but he also appoints them to distant governorates to which they cannot commute every day, the report says. In addition, the report writes, he now does not hire any new graduates of the teaching schools without making them sign a document that they do not belong to any religious group.

The report cites statements by Muhammad Badawi, an expert on curricula in the Ministry of Education, saying: "The Ministry [of Education] has been changed from a Ministry of Education to a ministry whose objective is to obliterate the Islamic identity from education." He adds that the teachers who have been moved to administrative positions have no real accusations leveled against them. The report also cites statements by the doyen of the Teachers' Union, who notes that "the information we have at our disposal confirms that there are no extremists in our schools." The report concludes by asking all teachers to fight for their rights with all their might.

Palestinian Affairs

U.S. Vice President Gore Arrives in Jericho

'Arafat Receives Gore

JN2403122195 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1205 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A short while ago, President Yasir 'Arafat received U.S. Vice President Al Gore at the presidential offices in Jericho. The U.S. vice president is accompanied by a U.S. economic and political delegation.

Palestinian and Israeli sides will sign an economic agreement on U.S. participation in the building of health, educational, and industrial projects in various Palestinian areas.

Talks Conclude; U.S. Offers Aid

JN2403155095 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The closed meeting between President Yasir 'Arafat and U.S. Vice President Al Gore concluded at the Presidential Office in the city of Jericho a short while ago.

At a joint news conference with Al Gore, President 'Arafat said the peace process had been discussed. He also referred to the dangers threatening the peace process.

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For his part, the U.S. vice president described his meeting with President 'Arafat as fruitful and said his country was interested in building the Palestinian infrastructure. He announced his country will grant $150 million dollars to the Palestinian Authority this year to build this infrastructure.

President 'Arafat and Al Gore also signed a document under which the Palestinian National Authority will be granted $8 million dollars to develop the infrastructure and establish services. The document also includes paragraphs on the U.S. marketing system regarding Palestinian products and customs arrangements.

Palestinian and American businessmen began an expanded meeting to discuss several joint economic agreements.

Economic Agreement Signed

JN2403193695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1830 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat received U.S. Vice President Al Gore at the Presidential Office in Jericho today. The U.S. vice president is accompanied by a U.S. economic and political delegation.

The Palestinian and U.S. sides signed an economic agreement on U.S. participation in the building of health, educational, and industrial projects in various Palestinian areas.

Mrs. Gore Visits School in Ramallah

JN2403152795 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The wife of U.S. Vice President Al Gore has visited the Children's Model School in the city of Ramallah. She was received by Yasir 'Amar, Education Minister of the Palestinian National Authority. The visit took place amid strict Israeli military measures, including the closure of the school's area until the end of the visit.

Welcoming the wife of Vice President Al Gore, Yasir 'Amr said it was difficult to achieve normalization and peace unless Israel withdrew, removed the settlements, and implemented the Declaration of Principles accord. He urged the two sponsors of the peace process, as well as the EC, to intervene to save the peace process, which he described as vulnerable to collapse and as paralyzed.

Sha'th on Symbolic Achievements of Visit

TA2403193295

[FBIS Editorial Report] Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic at 1700 GMT on 24 March broadcasts within its "The Week in 1 Hour" newsreel a live, 15-minute interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning in the Palestinian Authority [PA], and Moshe Sason, adviser to Israeli Police Minister Moshe Shahal. The interview is conducted in the studio by moderator Yusuf Isma'il.

Asked to assess the results of U.S. Vice President Al Gore's visit to Jericho, Sha'th says: "I believe the results were important in terms of the practical economic aspect and the symbolic political aspect. With regard to the symbolic political aspect, the visit undoubtedly reflects U.S. support for the PA, particularly in Jericho, which represents the Palestinian area subject to the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] in the West Bank. The vice president is the most senior U.S. official to meet with President 'Arafat on Palestinian land subject to the PNA."

Asked to comment on the agreement reached on the export of products from the PA areas to the United States, Sha'th says: "This brings us to the practical achievements, which I said are economic. I believe that, undoubtedly, the most important of these achievements is the United States' agreement to allow all Palestinian products, without any regulations on the volume, to enter U.S. markets without customs tariffs or taxes. I believe that this is extremely important. Only one Arab state, Morocco, has gained such a privilege. This opens the way for Palestinian exporters of flowers, strawberries, clothing, and leather products to develop their industries and trade. God willing, this will yield important gains for the Palestinians in the future."

Asked about the recent meeting between 'Arafat and Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in Cairo, Sha'th answers: "If we consider the United States the sponsor of the peace process, Egypt and Norway played a very important role in perpetuating and supporting this process. Egypt continues to play this role. This requires that Egypt constantly be kept in the picture with regard to developments, so that it can support this process as much as possible, which, in fact, is quite a lot. Moreover, it was essential that we exchange information and discuss joint action to support the peace process prior to President Mubarak's visit to the United States and following his meeting with Vice President Al Gore, which preceded our meeting with him."

Asked to comment on Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's remarks that implementing the second stage of the transfer of powers is contingent on the PA's measures against terrorism, Sha'th says: "First of all, I absolutely reject the statement that dates are not sacred. I completely agree, however, that we have a security responsibility, as does Israel, and that we must fulfill our responsibilities. The difference between the two statements is clear. If we link the entire peace process to one or more operations carried out by some person who is ready to sacrifice himself because he believes this to be his purpose, then we make the peace process subject not to our will but hostage to the will of a third party who hopes this process will fail. Dates are as sacred as the agreement and as sacred as the peace process. That means we should adhere to the dates and, at the same, should try to

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ensure their success. We must fulfill our responsibility, and Israel must fulfill its responsibility. An important part of this responsibility is adherence to dates."

In answer to a question about the Janin First concept, Sha'th says: "In fact, for a long time we had a significant role in running the municipalities. The issue is not one of running municipalities; the issue is the redeployment of forces. This must be implemented through the talks on the transfer of powers. If we were to agree on everything now and then draw up a timetable that would begin with Janin or Bethlehem, that would be a different thing, but I do not think that the transfer of the Janin Municipality alone will be acceptable to the PA."

Sha'th on Impact of Visit, Aid

NC2503075195 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 25 Mar 95

[Telephone interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of international cooperation in the Palestinian Authority, in Jericho, by Ramadan Husayn in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Husayn] U.S. Vice President Albert Gore visited Jericho yesterday for a meeting with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat. On the line with us from Jericho is Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of international cooperation in the Palestinian National Authority [PA] and chief Palestinian negotiator. Welcome to Voice of the Arabs Dr. Nabil.

[Sha'th] Good morning.

[Husayn] Could you tell us about the results of President 'Arafat's talks with U.S. Vice President Gore?

[Sha'th] Actually this visit to Jericho is important, both from the symbolic and practical points of view. From the symbolic perspective, Vice President Gore is the highest U.S. official to visit President 'Arafat, as PA chairman, on Palestinian territory in Jericho. It was a sign of support for the PA and symbolized its presence in the West Bank, which is the subject of the talks being delayed by Israel at the moment. As a symbol, the political gesture was clear and important. As far as political action is concerned, undoubtedly the U.S. Administration realizes—and I believe yesterday's meeting added to this realization—the consequences and danger of delaying the peace process and the need for the United States, as a cosponsor, to play its role in pressuring Israel, which is the one obstructing this process, and in safeguarding the peace process from the Israeli measures of siege imposed on the Palestinians and other measures. President 'Arafat's dialogue with Mr. Gore was frank and clear. I believe that it has left an impression that I hope will be translated into deeds soon. As for the practical matters, the most important result from the meeting was Vice President Gore's announcement that the United States will open its markets before Palestinian exports in commodities and products without any restrictions or import duty. This actually opens the door for the liberation of the Palestinian economy from Israel's captivity and signals the start of economic development that I hope will bear fruit in the near future.

[Husayn] Has the U.S. Administration decided to give aid to the Palestinian self-rule institutions?

[Sha'th] Yes. During the visit I signed with the U.S. side contracts under which the U.S. Administration provides backing for rebuilding roads in Gaza and educating the handicapped and those injured as a result of Israel's repression of the intifadah as well as some other projects. The United States informed us that it had readjusted the structure of the U.S. aid to the PA. Instead of being in the form of scattered and fragmented aid and small projects, this aid will take the form of three or four major projects offering intensive jobs and generating quick income, which could clearly benefit the Palestinian economy. We discussed the details of these projects.

[Husayn] On the political level, U.S. Vice President Albert Gore's talks with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat followed a round of talks between Gore and officials in Tel Aviv. Can we say that these talks have produced a certain progress toward settling outstanding issues, such as Palestinian elections and the redeployment of the Israeli forces in the West Bank?

[Sha'th] In fact, we have not been informed by the U.S. vice president of specific steps but he affirmed to us that Israel remains committed to the continuation of the peace process in the West Bank, which involves the redeployment of forces and elections. However, he also reaffirmed that this is linked to security. I hope this is not a new justification for the lack of progress. Naturally, we fully realize our security responsibility. During the meeting with Gore, President 'Arafat announced that the PA has taken security steps in implementation of the Oslo accord. However, commitment cannot be one sided. Dates must be sacred. Yitzhaq Rabin's remarks today that dates are not sacred means that the accord is not sacred and that peace is not sacred. As far as we are concerned, there must be full commitment to these issues. We have not heard more clarifications from Gore. We still believe the United States must do more in a process that it is sponsoring and to which it is a witness.

[Husayn] Therefore, you have not agreed with the Israeli side on the resumption of the talks on redeployment and elections?

[Sha'th] There are no specific dates now.

[Husayn] Regarding security, President 'Arafat has announced a series of measures on fighting terrorism. Do you believe these measures will lead to concern in the Palestinian political street at a time when the peace process has not achieved yet the desired progress?

[Sha'th] In fact, we have not taken any measures against the law. We have not sidestepped the law. The issue of

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human rights remains a top priority for us. However, these measures must be just and accurate and respect the [Oslo] agreement.

[Husayn] President 'Arafat held talks with President Muhammad Husni Mubarak in Cairo two days ago. Will Egypt undertake a certain activity to revitalize the negotiating process on the Palestinian-Israeli track?

[Sha'th] Egypt has always supported the Palestinian side in the peace process. Egypt has always stood on the side of the Palestinian people in war and peace. Egypt is playing a strategic role. This requires the Palestinian side to always brief the Egyptian president on the ongoing developments. This is what President 'Arafat does whenever he meets with President Mubarak. Such meetings take place two or three times each month. In turn, President Mubarak briefs President 'Arafat on current developments. Egypt is taking steps with all states to promote the peace process. President Mubarak will shortly meet with President Clinton in the United States. President Mubarak wants to know the Palestinian stand so he confront all the proposals that call for the continuation of the deployment of the Israeli forces. Ultimately, one can say the Mubarak-'Arafat meeting in Cairo was successful. It was followed by an important meeting at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry with a high—level U.S. delegation which is discussing economic aid to Palestine. This delegation met with President Mubarak, who will perhaps play a role in promoting the aid process to the Palestinian side.

'Urayqat on Political Meaning of Visit

JN2503133495 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0547 GMT 25 Mar 95

[Telephone interview with Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government in the Palestinian Authority, by Ahmad Zaki in the studio from the "New Day" program—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Zaki] Local Government Minister Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, good morning.

['Urayqat] Good morning to you.

[Zaki] You attended His Excellency President 'Arafat's meetings with U.S. Vice President Al Gore. How do you assess this U.S. tour in the Palestinian territories?

['Urayqat] The U.S. Vice President's arrival in the Palestinian National Authority area in Jericho and his meeting with his Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat has one political meaning—there can be no Middle East in any form whatsoever without settling the Palestinian cause in all its aspects. As you know, the U.S. Vice President's visit to the Gulf, to the other Arab countries, and to Israel are part of the U.S. strategy for the region. This meeting means that the key to a solution in the region is linked to the Palestinian cause.

[Zaki] Dr. Sa'ib, what impact will these meetings have?

['Urayqat] I believe that the political aspect was very clear. His Excellency President 'Arafat stressed that Gaza-Jericho is not a segment that can stand alone, that Gaza and Jericho should have come together during the interim stage, the phased agreement on Israel's withdrawal from the other parts of the West Bank and [words indistinct] in the West Bank, to be followed by the Palestinian legislative elections. There is a delay of more than eight months. The president said that next June should be a sacred deadline for this.

As for the economic aspect, for example, signing [words indistinct] agreements worth $65 million; $40 million for the sewage system in the Gaza Strip and $25 million for creating jobs in the Gaza Strip too. The president also received a message from President Clinton.

[Zaki] Dr. Sa'ib, can you tell us about some of the contents of this message?

['Urayqat] This message exempted Palestinian trade, agricultural, and industrial goods and products from any U.S. taxes or customs duties. I believe that Palestine will be the second in the Arab world, after Morocco, to receive such treatment. A meeting by businessmen was also held while U.S. Vice President Al Gore was meeting with His Excellency Yasir 'Arafat. This should be immediately exploited to encourage Palestinian products.

[Zaki] How do you assess the new U.S. role, particularly that the United States used to be against the PLO, and rejected holding any dialogue with it, while now there is overt dialogue, negotiations, and assistance?

['Urayqat] Let me say this so the entire world can acknowledges this, that ignoring facts does not mean they do not exist. The truth is that the Palestinian cause is the key to the solution of the conflict in the region. There was a disavowal of the Palestinian cause in terms of its national aspects, by denying the existence of the PLO, or by not holding a dialogue with it or forging peace with the PLO. However, the world, Israel, and the United States have come to realize that the PLO is the Palestinian people's legitimate and sole representative.

This is one aspect. This is political pragmatism. Another aspect, and on the level of the U.S. stand, these stands continue to be biased toward Israel. There is a blind bias toward Israel. We do not want to speak without taking this fact into consideration. But, in spite of all this, we say that the world now realizes that the Palestinian cause is the gateway to this region and the key to a solution from all its aspects. The Palestinian cause is the key to the new formula for a Middle East order. No such order can be established unless the Palestinian cause is settled in all its aspects. We should not wager on changing the U.S. stand and its bias toward Israel. We say that the United States is largely biased toward Israel. The U.S. sponsor did not carry out its full role, it did not act in the balanced manner that is required from a sponsor. The United States was and continues to be biased toward

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Israel. There are many breaches in the Arab world through which the United States can easily penetrate.

What we want to say here is that we tackle matters with political pragmatism. In politics, we deal only with the language of interests. I believe that when the world says that the Palestinian cause is the key to the solution of the conflict in the region, this represents a great recognition by the world after it denied this for many decades.

[Zaki] Dr. Sa'ib, the United States is viewed as Israel's ally. Does Al Gore carry any message from the Palestinian command to the U.S. President on specific demands?

['Urayqat] We do not deny that we have said that an agreement was signed in Washington, that Washington sponsored the Oslo agreement. The Oslo agreement contained specific points, including the withdrawal and redeployment of the Israeli forces outside the West Bank and the populated areas in the West Bank at a date that should have been 13 July 1994. Now, there is a new deadline in June 1995. This means a one year delay during which the United States did not take any steps worth mentioning to bring pressure to bear on the Israeli side to have it implement its obligations under the agreement. It left Israel to procrastinate and carry out obstructions without doing anything worth mentioning. As President 'Arafat said, the Gaza-Jericho agreement cannot stand on its two feet in isolation from the other parts of the West Bank, the other provisions of the agreement, and in isolation from holding the legislative elections. I believe that if the United States does not wish the peace process to collapse, the U.S. side, the countries of the world, and Israel should understand that the June deadline should be the date for implementing all aspects of the interim stage.

[Zaki] Dr. Sa'ib, are there any new meetings with the Israeli side?

['Urayqat] Yes, I and the head of the Israeli delegation will meet in Jericho tomorrow morning, Sunday. This is a preparatory meeting for the next negotiations session on elections to be held in Cairo next Tuesday and Wednesday.

[Zaki] Local Government Minister Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, thank you.

Cabinet Discusses Gore's Visit, Separation

JN2503195895 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1830 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Yasir 'Arafat chaired the weekly meeting of the Council of Ministers of the National Authority in the city of Jericho this morning. Following the end of the meeting, al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, secretary general of the presidency, made the following statement to Jericho Voice of Palestine:

[Begin 'Abd-al-Rahim recording] The Council of Ministers of the Palestinian Authority held a meeting under the chairmanship of brother President Yasir 'Arafat. Nearly all the members of the council were present. The council discussed several issues listed on its agenda, including the U.S. vice president's visit to Jericho and its political and economic dimensions, praising it and its results on all levels. The council also reviewed the president's visit to Egypt and his meeting with President Mubarak, hailing Egypt's support for the Palestinian National Authority and the Palestine question, as well as Egypt's emphasis that Israel's seriousness should be judged by its commitment to the principle of land for peace and by the extent of progress on the Palestinian track. The council then decided to observe summer time in Palestinian areas, the West Bank and Gaza Strip, from 7 April to 19 September. [passage omitted]

The council then discussed the security situation in the Palestinian National Authority's areas and hailed measures by the Palestinian security organs to preserve the dignity of the authority and to block any attempt to kill the newly-born Palestinian dream and give the Israeli authority justification to disavow the agreements it has reached with the Palestinian side.

The council also discussed Israel's plan of separation, and although we have not yet had any official information about that plan, the council referred this issue to the Palestinian negotiations committee to follow it and submit a report to the Council of Ministers to take an appropriate decision. [passage omitted] [end recording]

'Arafat Visits Jericho Radio Station, Comments

JN2503114895 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0820 GMT 25 Mar 95

["Dialogue" between unidentified Voice of Palestine staff and correspondents and Yasir 'Arafat, PLO Executive Committee chairman and head of the Palestinian Authority, during his "visit to the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation in Jericho" on 24 March—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] To all the listeners in the beloved homeland, this is a surprise from the Voice of Palestine. Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] has arrived in a beloved part of the homeland. It seems that this is another step toward the homeland, toward the remaining occupied land that will be liberated soon, God willing. Mr. President, we welcome you at the Voice of Palestine, the voice of the Palestinian people...

['Arafat, interrupting] It seems you have organized a raid against me. I am here to visit you, not to hold an interview.

[Correspondent] The truth is that we like nice surprises, and your visit to Voice of Palestine is one of these surprises. This proves that you support this radio, which expresses the voice of the Palestinian people throughout the homeland.

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['Arafat] I want to congratulate you and to congratulate Palestine because you, its sons, have made this achievement in spite of the meager means which certain people ridiculed. They used to say: Is it possible that they can do anything worthwhile? We see that you have established this radio, the Voice of Palestine, that enters every house and heart and has won the sympathy of the Palestinian citizens and of the sons of our Arab nation at every location in which this radio can be heard. Fathi, I was in Tunis some time ago. They spoke to me about the radio. They have heard about it. They told me: We congratulate you for this leap...

[Correspondent, interrupting] We produced a two-hour evening transmission with Tunis radio, brother Abu-'Ammar, with our meager means. One question: Do you listen to us now and then in spite of your busy schedule?

['Arafat] I do listen to you at times, but not always. This is because I have too much work. I do not have time to drink water, or to breathe. In spite of this, every time I have the occasion to turn on my small radio, which as you know is near my desk, I listen to you. In the past, I used to listen. Now, as every Palestinian, the first station I listen to is the Voice of Palestine. I do not do this out of partiality. No, but because you have imposed your presence. That's why I first thank God, then I thank all those who work in this radio station with means ...[pauses] some experts when they realize with what means you work wonder how this is possible. I tell them: Yes, it is possible, because this has nothing to do with means but has to do with these minds, intentions, determination, and this loyalty.

[Correspondent] Brother Abu-'Ammar, they all are young men, except me and brother Abu-Shadi [not further identified], and Yusuf al-Qazzaz. The others, even brother Abu-'Anan [not further identified] are young men but loyal..

['Arafat, interrupting] What young men? [laughter] A day one passes here is like one thousand days.

[Correspondent] Brother Abu-'Ammar, if you wish we can now address general issues. How do you assess your meetings with Al Gore?

['Arafat] There is no doubt that His Excellency U.S. Vice President Al Gore's visit to the region, which included many Arab countries like Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Oman, after this Israel and the Palestinian territories, means much. As I told you, Fathi and Basim, you remember what I said?

[Correspondent] Of course.

['Arafat] I told you that we will impose our presence on the political and geographical map. We imposed our presence on this map. I told you so at a time when there was no ray of hope. I used to tell you that I see a light at the end of the tunnel. I used to also say that I see the minarets, churches, and walls of Jerusalem. The people used to say that Abu-'Ammar is just speaking in rhetoric. But, now we see them, and if there is too much traffic, we can still hear it.

[Correspondent] I remember you said this in (Wartah), Sukkarah, and al-Mazzah.

['Arafat] And in Beirut. The other day, I received a U.S. senator who had visited me in Beirut. At the time, he asked me: Abu-'Ammar, where are you going? I told him that I am going to Palestine. They think that I said this to brag. No. I also used to say that we were in a dark tunnel but that I see the lights, minarets, and churches of Jerusalem at the end of the tunnel.

[Correspondent] Brother Abu-'Ammar you saw them from the plane?

['Arafat] No. I saw them from here.

[Correspondent] Did you carefully look at them from the window of the plane?

['Arafat] Yes....

[Correspondent, interrupting] And then you visualized them?

['Arafat] I closed my eyes for one reason—because I have another appointment with them..

[Correspondent] An imminent appointment, God willing?

['Arafat] The last time I prayed in al-Aqsa Mosque was early in 1968. Of course, I did so in secret. While praying, Israeli soldiers from both sexes entered the mosque, laughing. At that time, I said: May God's peace and blessing upon you. By God, I will not pray in the mosque unless it is liberated. And to enter your temple as they had entered it before. [Koranic verses] God always fulfills his promises.

[Correspondent] On the sidelines of your meetings with Mr. Al Gore, you said that the date for implementing the remaining part of the Declaration of Principles is close?

['Arafat] This was at the top of the agenda of the meeting with Vice President Gore. He spoke about security. I told him: Security should be for both sides. The settlers committed a massacre in Jerusalem, another in Hebron, and the other day in Ramallah when they sealed off streets, set houses and cars on fire. Have we forgotten this? There are problems every day. Today, they threatened to block the road before me. Why have they called it the peace of the brave? Because we knew from the beginning that this peace has enemies, and that I and Mr. Rabin should have the will because we are the ones who signed the peace of the brave. We must have the determination to overcome all the obstacles.

They keep repeating the tune of security, security [preceding two words in English]. Should we not have security too? Of course, we should. Our security should

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also be taken into consideration. The security of both sides should be safeguarded.

I have the right to say that elections were supposed to be held in July, according to the agreement.

[Correspondent] In July last year.

['Arafat] When we used to speak about this, they used to say: No sacred date [preceding three words in English]. After this, they said: The Palestinian Authority does not have funds to spend. We attended the donor countries meeting in Brussels and were promised that they would cover the deficit in our budget for a six-month period. Then came the issue of security [preceding word in English]. I would like here to say something: Let the far and near hear what I say. With respect to the Bet Lid operation, the two boys slept in al-Duhniyah. Do you know what and where al- Duhniyah is?

[Correspondent] The agents?

['Arafat] The agents, and it is located south east of the Gaza Strip on the Egyptian borders.

[Correspondent] In the past, this was a place of exile.

['Arafat] How did these two boys enter al-Duhniyah? A car transported them in the morning. The distance from al-Duhniyah to Bet Lid takes two and half hours to cross. They changed their clothes to military ones. This is an important point. Fathi, bear with me. They changed their clothes and the car transported them. From where did they get the explosives on the road? This explosive material [preceding two words in English] are highly explosive. From where did they take them, as well as the military clothes? Let me say another thing. What car transported them? I did not go there. I asked the brothers, including brother Radwan. Have I not asked you Radwan how many checkpoints a car has to pass through? You told me six or seven checkpoints. What kind of car does not stop at checkpoints, or passes through them without being asked what it is carrying and whom it transports? After this, they let them step down from the car and told them to go stand at the station where the soldiers are gathered.

[Correspondent] Brother Abu-'Ammar, I still remember...

['Arafat interrupting] One of them has not even left the Gaza Strip [words indistinct] for the first time. Hence, how is this happened. I said this for first time in Cairo during the four-way meeting, then I said it at the Erez meeting. Now they are digging a trench around al-Duhniyah. This means that through their investigations, it was proven...[pauses] I do not say the leaders are involved, I say that there are elements who are involved in this. Can anyone convince me that Baruch Goldstein-...[pauses] Are there people who are like movie stars in normal life? There are no heroes like those in the cinema. Can one person kill 37 people and injure 268 others—some injured by three or four different kinds of bullets?

[Correspondent] This is Rambo.

['Arafat] Is there a Rambo in real life? The investigation commission said Goldstein arrived at the mosque—the Ibrahimi Mosque—and unfortunately the patrol arrived late. [Words indistinct] you should respect your military uniform. There are other examples. Can a nurse leave the room in which she tends patients before another nurse comes to replace her?

[Correspondent] No, of course not.

['Arafat] How can they say that there were no guards at the mosque's gate because the patrol was late? Is this military discipline? Can a soldier leave his place before his colleague replaces him?

[Correspondent] Of course not.

[Al-Barqawi] Brother Abu-'Ammar, I still remember that on the day of the bus operation in Tel Aviv, I came to you early that morning. You told me: Brother Fathi [al-Barqawi], this operation is not against Israel as much as it is against us.

['Arafat] Undoubtedly. I want to say something: Whenever we reach a stage of implementing the agreement, an operation takes place.

[Al-Barqawi] When you came to Jericho, also...

['Arafat interrupting] The same thing happened. Hence, I want to say one thing: Is this a coincidence?

[Al-Barqawi] No, of course not.

['Arafat] Of course it is not a coincidence. Is it directed against Israel, or is it mainly directed against the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian people? Until yesterday, Gaza and the West Bank were closed for 168 days of the last 10 months. This means about 60 percent, or a little less than 60 percent. As I told Rabin: When you used to close the Strip or the West Bank, you used to allocate $20 million or $25 million in order to activate the market through employing workers in minor activities such as cleaning the streets. Do you close the (?territories) for 168 days to starve the Strip? Then the truck was stopped in order to prevent the entry of trucks carrying flowers, tomatoes, and strawberries, and other products and vegetables. Was this a coincidence? No it was not a coincidence. Then, we have to ask: What was behind these operations? I do not want to make a judgment now, but I have lots of information, and I will reveal this information at the appropriate time. He who laughs last, laughs best.

[Correspondent] Brother Abu-'Ammar, of course, it is clear that there are elements...

['Arafat, interrupting] It is an attempt to sabotage the peace process.

[Correspondent] The Israeli side, brother Abu-'Ammar...

['Arafat, interrupting] To sabotage the peace process and prevent the Palestinian Authority from extending its authority over Palestinian territory.

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[Correspondent] Yes, this is what we want to say. The Israeli side...

['Arafat, interrupting] In whose interest is this? Planning operations and giving orders to certain people to implement operations here, in whose interest is this?

[Correspondent] Brother Abu-'Ammar, despite all the obstacles, schemes, and practices, can you tell our Palestinian people when the Palestinian Authority will be extended to the other Palestinian territories?

['Arafat] They see this as a far-off event, but we see it as quite near. And do thou be patient, for thy patience is but from God; nor grieve over them; and distress not yourself because of their plots. [Koranic verse]

[Correspondent] So this is a clear signal that this will soon happen, God willing. My question, Mr. President Abu-'Ammar is about the situation of prisoners. There are thousands of prisoners behind bars.

['Arafat] One of the most disgraceful and painful things is that these operations have barred the ministerial committee from meeting. The committee is led by [Israeli Police Minister Moshe] Shahal on the Israeli side and on our part by my brother Dr. Nabil Sha'th. The committee was scheduled to meet on Monday [27 March] but the meeting has been postponed.

[Correspondent] I want here to ask brother Abu-'Ammar, around this date 27 years ago, you also were in al-Ghawr but on the other bank. We witnessed al-Karamah. On the anniversary of al-Karamah, what do you have to say about the transfer from there to here? What are the feelings of brother Abu-'Ammar, President Yasir 'Arafat?

['Arafat] From the day we set out, many people did not encourage us. I do not want to give examples. But this is the will of a people who have decided not to be driven into oblivion. It is also God's will. God has soldiers. The Prophet Muhammad said once: A group of my nation shall continue to adhere to religion. This group shall fight its enemies. It will not be harmed by its enemies and it will achieve victory, God willing. The prophet was asked: Where are those people and who are they? He said: In Jerusalem and its vicinity.

Those people shall continue to maintain their steadfastness until the Day of Judgment. The Prophet Muhammad told this to his companions. Do you see this heavenly privilege? We are a steadfast people.

[Correspondent] This reminds me of what you told me a short while ago, brother Abu-'Ammar. You spoke about Bayt Surik and the first operation with your brother martyr Abu-Sabri. Does this remind you of anything?

['Arafat] Certainly. We fought bravely and in accordance with a Palestinian decision. When the Prophet Muhammad, may God's peace and blessings be upon him, concluded the al-Hudaybiyah Accord, Caliph 'Umar 'Ibn-al-Khattab came and told the Prophet: This is a disgraceful accord. How can we expect disgrace in our religion? [words indistinct] between Muhammad, the Prophet of God, [word indistinct] and Quraysh. They told him: We did not fight you. He said: You may strike this word off and make it an accord between Muhammad Bin-'Abdallah and Quraysh. There was even a condition in the accord restricting the Prophet's right to accept certain people who want to convert to Islam.

[Correspondent] This is a famous event.

['Arafat] This is history, mind you. Therefore, we respect the Prophet. This is true Islam. If we make peace, we must respect our accord. I did not conclude an accord in the name of Yasir 'Arafat.

[Correspondent] In the name of the Palestinian people.

['Arafat] In the name of the PLO, the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in accordance with a decision from its Executive Committee and a decision from its Central Council. We went to Madrid in line with a decision issued by the Palestine National Council, which was held in Algiers.

[Correspondent] Every Palestinian must respect this agreement.

['Arafat] Certainly.

[Correspondent] But apparently, brother Abu-'Ammar, Israel has so far not honored its agreements with us.

['Arafat] This is true, but don't think that...[pauses] You should understand and I remind you that when de Gaulle concluded an agreement with the Algerians, there were leaders in the French Army from the OAS [Organisation de l'Armee Secrete—Secret Army Organization]. Right? From the OAS?

[Correspondent] That is true, in 1961.

['Arafat] We know that there are several OAS's, that is, secret organizations within the Israeli Army that do not want this. Not only are there Levinger and the extremists, but there are people inside the Army. Those extremists have relatives and sons in the Army.

[Correspondent] Brother Abu-'Ammar, we are happy for your historic visit to your sons at the Voice of Palestine in the Palestinian Radio and Television Corporation. Is there a final word you would like to address to our Palestinian Arab people—men, women, and elderly people—who are happy to see you in this great Palestinian homeland?

['Arafat] I only want to repeat the Koranic verse: And we wished to be gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders in faith and make them heirs, to establish a firm place for them in the land. [Koranic verse]

[Correspondent] Thank you Mr. President Abu-'Ammar.

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PLO Faction Calls For Suspending Talks With Israel

NC2403154995 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1355 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunis, 24 Mar (MENA)—The Political Bureau of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front [PPSF] has called for suspending negotiations with Israel. It also called on the cosponsors of the peace process, especially the United States, as well as the world community and concerned Arab parties to pressure the Rabin government to save the peace process and to negotiate in good faith, basing them once again on the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles.

At the end of two days of meetings in Tunis under the chairmanship of PPSF Secretary General Samir Ghawshah, the Political Bureau rejected Israel's proposals concerning redeployment and the promotion of the so-called Janin First proposal. These proposals, it said, would mean holding new negotiations on the principle of redeployment and they would harm already-scheduled arrangements and complicate the redeployment process without setting a timeframe for completing it as soon as possible.

The PPSF called for activating PLO institutions and frameworks, especially the Executive Committee, by having it hold regular and periodic meetings and determine its relationship with the Palestinian Authority [PA] in a way that helps the committee play a role as a leading contact with the PA. It stressed the need to improve the performance of the PA by pursuing clear and specific economic policies and establishing legal and administrative frameworks to ensure accountability and clarity.

The Political Bureau rejected attempts to end the Arab boycott of Israel and normalize Arab relations with it before it withdraws from all occupied Arab and Palestinian territories and a comprehensive peace is achieved.

The Political Bureau demanded that a term of reference for the negotiations be determined and that the Executive Committee and its negotiations follow-up committee assume the tasks of planning, supervision, and development based on a negotiating strategy that determines the priorities and subjects of the negotiations on the bases of agreement and that avoids the loopholes of past experience. It also called for correcting the performance of the PA by adopting clear and specific economic and social policies and establishing legal and administrative institutions.

The PPSF Political Bureau also called for work to revive and develop Arab coordination among the Arab parties participating in the political process, to restore Arab solidarity, and to activate Arab League institutions to preserve pan-Arab security and defeat all attempts to lift the Arab boycott of Israel or normalize relations with it.

Control of Muslim Schools in Jerusalem Reported

TA2403134995 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 24 Mar 95 pp 1, 3

[Report by Bill Hutman]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Palestinian Authority [PA] has made another major inroad in Jerusalem in recent weeks, taking control of Muslim schools in the city, while leaving the old Jordanian administration intact to appease Israel.

Municipal officials said they are aware the PA took control of the Muslim, or Waqf, school system, and have appealed for government action.

Mayor Ehud Olmert has gone directly to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin over the issue, which he said threatens Israeli authority in eastern Jerusalem and violates the Oslo accord, which forbids PA activity in the city.

The Waqf school system includes 8,000 pupils in about 20 schools that were under Jordanian authority until the start of the academic year.

In September, however, the PA took Jordan's place as the financial backer of the schools. But PA funds quickly dried up, leaving the schools on the brink of closure for the past several months.

About two weeks ago, however, PA Minister Without Portfolio Faysal al-Husayni informed the heads of the school system that their financial problems were over, and that the PA had found funding for their schools, sources said.

The money for the schools was raised by al-Husayni from Saudi Arabia, as part of a multi-million dollar aid package earmarked for Palestinian development in Jerusalem, the sources said.

But in an effort to avoid angering Israel, at least on paper, the money is being transferred to the schools through the existing Waqf education system, the sources added.

A letter from Waqf education director Husni al-Sha'b reporting that funds were found for the schools was obtained by THE JERUSALEM POST. It makes no mention of the source of the money.

Al-Sha'b remains the official head of the school system, a position he has held for three decades. But most of the decisions are being made by the PA Education Ministry offices in Bethlehem, the sources said.

"We are being very careful not to anger Israel," said one Palestinian education official. "But we are not really afraid. What is it going to do, close down all the schools?

"Israel tried to force its education system on east Jerusalem in 1967, but failed and the Jordanian system remained intact. It won't be able to do anything to stop the PA either."

Teachers were informed last week that their salary problems had not only been solved, but that they would receive a raise. Muhammad Suwayn, head of the Palestinian Teachers Union, said he didn't know where the money was suddenly found.

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"You must ask al-Husayni about that," he said.

Al-Husayni was unavailable for comment yesterday.

Suwayn confirmed the PA is trying to exert its authority over Arab schools in Jerusalem, and that it has been successful in many areas. PA Education Ministry supervisors regularly visit non- municipality Arab schools, about half the Arab schools in the city, Suwayn said.

All of the about 40,000 Palestinian pupils in Jerusalem will have their grades registered with the PA Education Ministry office in Bethlehem, and their diplomas stamped by the ministry, he said.

"A committee is currently finalizing a new curriculum for next year that will be applied to schools in the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem," Suwayn added.

An Education Ministry spokeswoman said the ministry would "look into the reports the PA is taking control of the school system in east Jerusalem."

A municipal spokesman said Olmert raised the issue with Education Minister Amnon Rubinstein, after taking it up with Rabin. The ministry spokeswoman, however, denied Olmert had raised the matter with Rubinstein.

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Algeria

AL WATAN Reports More Than 300 Islamists Killed by Army

LD2503133595 Paris France-2 Television Network in French 1200 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In probably the biggest army operation since the beginning of the current troubles in Algeria, 300 armed Islamic fundamentalists are reported to have been killed in an ambush 115 km southwest of Algiers. That, in any case, is what the Algerian daily newspaper AL WATAN said this morning. Stephane Manier was able to speak to Hamid Benturki, the author of the article, by telephone.

[Begin Benturki recording] There was a very violent confrontation in the region of Ain Defla. There are apparently two hypotheses: either there was a meeting of the emirs—a major gathering—or else, according to information obtained from other sources, there was a convoy of about 30 trucks carrying between 450 and 500 terrorists, and it was intercepted by units of the ANP [National People's Army]. More than 300 Islamists are said to have been killed and others, who have fled, are being hunted down by the ANP. [end recording]

Security Forces Kill 22 'Criminals' in 3 Days

LD2503151595 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In a statement, the security forces today announced that the security forces have eliminated 22 criminals following a number of operations carried out between 22 and 24 March in Mostaganem, Constantine, Bouira, Oum el Bouaghi, Algiers, Tipasa, and Media. The security forces also managed during the same operations to recover a quantity of arms and ammunitions, grenades, and inflammatory audio cassettes.

Army Reportedly Kills 600 GIA Members

LD2603172895 Paris LCI Television in French 1700 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In Algeria, more than 600 armed Islamists have reportedly been killed in an operation mounted by the army against a GIA [Islamic Armed Group] base located 150 kilometers west of Algiers. The Algerian daily newspaper LE SOIR is the source of this information. It reports that a 1,000 men belonging to the GIA—the most radical of the armed movements in Algeria—had gathered at the location in order to hold a conference of the organization. It is then that the massacre took place.

AIS Denounces GIA's Violence Against Women

LD2603221995 Paris Radio France International in French 2130 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] According to the Algiers daily LA TRIBUNE, there is a running battle going on between the Salvation Islamic Army [AIS] and the Armed Islamic Group [GIA]. In a communique, the AIS reportedly denounced, I quote, the barbaric acts of the GIA against women. The GIA reportedly disarmed members of the AIS in reprisals and reportedly threatened to kill them.

EL MOUDJAHID Director Shot Dead

NC2703112495 Paris AFP in English 1056 GMT 27 Mar 95

[All names as received]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Algiers, March 27 (AFP)—The director of Algerian government daily EL MOUDJAHID, Mohamed Abderahmani, was shot dead in the capital Algiers on Monday, security officials said in a statement.

Abderahmani was assassinated at Oued Kniss in the eastern Ruisseau suburb of the city, the statement said.

He was the 30th journalist to be murdered since May 1993 in attacks blamed on suspected Islamic extremists at war with the secular, army-based government.

The French language EL MOUDJAHID is the oldest newspaper in Algeria and the symbol of the government press.

Security officials gave no details of the circumstances of Abderrahmani's murder. Another EL MOUDJAHID journalist, Ferhat Cherkit, was gunned down in central Algiers a few weeks ago and another newspaper director, Salid Mekbel of LE MATIN, was killed last December 3.

FIS Leader Urges Unification of Armed Groups

LD2503112195 Paris Radio France International in French 0630 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In Algeria, the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] has reaffirmed its position that the solution to the current crisis lies within the scope of the platform put together in Rome last January by the FIS and a large section of the legal opposition. This was reiterated in an interview which Mr. Anouar Haddam, the FIS representative in Washington, granted to an opposition newspaper in Morocco, AL ISTIQLAL. Mr. Haddam also declared that his movement, while having no organic links with armed Islamic groups, was working to achieve the unification of these movements. He said that such groups should bow to the authority of the elected leaders of the FIS.

London Forum Participants Urge Dialogue; Army Leader Cited

MM2403141495 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 24 Mar 95 p 4

[Unattributed report: "Ben Bella and Brahimi Tell AL-HAYAH: Algerian London Meetings Are Not Rome-3"]

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[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-HAYAH—London yesterday witnessed further meetings among officials of opposition Algerian parties. A number of party leaders stressed in statements to AL-HAYAH that a serious dialogue is the only way to resolve the crisis. Former President Ahmed Ben Bella said that what is required is "a serious dialogue. We want a dialogue organized by everyone, not just the authorities. We do not want a dialogue in which points defined beforehand by the authorities are imposed on us." He pointed out that the authorities has in the past organized dialogues which "proved a failure." He said that President Liamine Zeroual's current call for "bilateral consultations" with the parties falls within the framework of the failing dialogues. He said that what the parties agreed upon in Rome is the "basis" and the London meetings are not a Rome-3, nor are they aimed at introducing any change to the points stipulated in the national contract. He described "obstructing the travel" of National Liberation Front Secretary General Abdelhamid Mehri as "an arbitrary measure."

As for former Prime Minister Abdelhamid Brahimi, he told AL-HAYAH that the London meeting "is certainly not a Rome-3. It is an information meeting for leaders and officials of Algerian parties. It is aimed at explaining the truth about what is happening in Algeria." Having stressed the need to resolve the crisis through dialogue, he said that this meeting is a kind of a counter-campaign against "the media campaign conducted by Algerian authorities through their embassies in Europe and media in the country against the parties" that participated in the two Rome seminars. He added: "Therefore, the meeting is an opportunity to provide details about the 'Rome contract' and explain the facts to British officials." Asked whether he meant that party officials will meet with officials in Britain, he said that informational and political meetings will be held at various levels with officials and representatives of British parties and associations.

Elsewhere, AL-HAYAH has learned that Madani Merzak, "amir" of the Islamic Salvation Army [AIS] has issued a statement numbered "3," in which he spoke of "expanding the responsibilities." He said: "Out of the desire to prevent any deviation, intercept the spread of any destructive ideas among jihad ranks, and unite all informational channels, we inform the Algerian people in general and the fighters in particular that the crucial position and decisions are taken by the national leadership of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] and the AIS."

The statement did not specify who comprises the "national leadership." However, it pointed to attempts being made "to move the Muslim Algerian people from the FIS' authentic line drawn up by our noble shaykhs." Thus the statement is confirming that it is committed to the policy of Shaykhs Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj.

Tunisian Operations Have Government 'Blessing'

MM2403140095 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 24 Mar 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by Jamal Khashuqji: "Armed Groups Active on Border; Tunisian Patrols in East Algeria"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London—Tunisian and Algerian sources connected with Islamists have said that patrols from the Tunisian border guards are conducting military and security tasks in east Algeria without any objection from the Algerian authorities.

The Tunisian measure came as a result of a severe security deterioration in the eastern region of Algeria, the expansion of the armed groups' operations along the Tunisian-Algerian border, and the operations carried out by Algerian opposition groups against Tunisian targets, such as the "Sundus" operation carried out on 11 February.

Algerian groups accuse the Tunisian Government of supporting the Algerian regime, which has for over three years been facing guerrilla warfare, namely since its cancellation of the first free legislative elections, which the Islamists were about to win.

The Tunisian authorities have not concealed their hostile position toward the Islamists. They too are facing similar opposition, but peaceful opposition. Tunisia openly supported the cancellation of the Algerian elections early in 1992.

The Algerian sources say that the Algerian Islamic groups are led by an old Islamist who was one of the Islamic Salvation Front's cadres in the days of its political activities. He is Mohamed Heless [as transliterated], known as Abu Talha. They are in control of mountain and country bases in Annaba, from which their activities are launched. They are the same bases set up by the National Liberation Front army in east Algeria during the independence war against France in the early fifties. The topography of the region is interlinked between the two states, Tunisia and Algeria, especially in the forest areas.

Algerian General Said Fadil, who enjoys the support of Chief of Staff Gen. Mohamed Lamari, took charge of the region last year. But he is not receiving sufficient supplies from the capital in the center. The Tunisians have not hesitated to perform what they believe is their duty, for fear of the collapse of the situation on their western border. This has been happening since the beginning of this year. The aid includes logistic help, weapons, and sometimes participation in patrols and operations.

The Algerian sources say that Abu Talha personally supervised the "Sundus" operation inside the Tunisian border. A number of Tunisian border guards were killed in this operation. It was carried out "in retaliation for Tunisian intervention against Islamists" in Algeria, as sources close to them say.

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Algerian government sources, who asked to remain anonymous, did not deny this information. In fact they stressed that the Tunisian activities "enjoy the government's approval and blessing."

Tunisian sources say that the border line between the two country has been "mined" to prevent a repetition of the "Sundus" operation and also to burn the forests, especially those situated in the 'Ayn al-Darahim area, northwest of Tunisia. The burning process has been limited to this area. But on the other hand, burning down the trees is one of the most important means of defense. It is aimed at hampering the Islamists' activities. Algerian sources say that 500 hectares out of 3,500 have been burned down, that is nearly one seventh of the Algerian forests.

The Tunisian sources revealed the existence of cooperation between a small Tunisian group belonging to the Tunisian Salvation Front and those who carried out the "Sundus" operation. The front in question is a new Islamic party led by a Tunisian named Abu Ja'far, who supports the use of force to confront the Tunisian Government. The sources cite other operations which have taken place in 'Ayn al-Darahim and al-Kaf, but which were not as significant as the "Sundus" operation.

'CIA Agent' Wrote L'EXPRESS Article on Arms To Iran

LD2603203195 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the fabricated uproar triggered over the issue of selling French weapons to Iran, through alleged Algerian mediation, and the Algerian, French, and even the Iranian denials, the daily L'AUTHENTIQUE revealed today the identity of the writer of the article, the source of the accusation published by the French weekly L'EXPRESS.

It became clear that the writer of the article was a CIA agent who intended to destabilize Algerian-French relations, and harm some French figures concerned with the French presidential elections campaign.

On the other hand, the Algerian daily added that there was information from German intelligence confirming that the writer of the article also worked against German and French interests, especially in the field of information technology.

The charge that the French weekly published was also connected with the crisis that took place between Paris and Washington over the CIA men in Paris, and Washington's stances that offered facilities for welcoming those who supported terrorism in Algeria.

Authorities Deny Involvement in Missile Exports to Iran

LD2503215895 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Algerian authorities have denied reports that they were behind the operation of sending French missiles to Iran as the French weekly 'L'Express' had reported.

The Algerian Government had asked the Algerian embassy in Paris to open an inquiry in the subject and to file a legal suit against the French weekly on charges of slander and an attempt to involve Algeria in the supply of Iran with French weapons.

'L'Express' had reported that France had sold Iran weapons which were transported by a civilian Algerian cargo plane towards Nicosia in Cyprus. [passage omitted]

Zeroual: Local Elections To Follow Presidential Poll

LD2603202395 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1800 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The president of the state has confirmed before the new constitutional council that local and general elections will take place after the presidential elections. During that phase, in which the role of the constitutional council will be determined, Algeria will have to restore trust and concord within the nation. The choice of the president with complete sovereignty and complete freedom should reconcile citizens with their institutions, Liamine Zeroual added. This will make it possible to consolidate democracy, to restore civilian peace, and to base social and economic development increasingly on effort, productivity and social justice. President Liamine Zeroual said the seven members of the constitutional council he met this morning will play a determining role. Their mission is to guarantee the absolute loyalty [as heard] of the forthcoming presidential elections. [passage omitted]

The head of state said to the constitutional council this morning that the state has been called on to promote the dialogue which, thanks to the responsible participation of those who have been invited, would make it possible to provide the most favorable conditions and all the guarantees necessary for the integrity and the openness of the presidential elections. A new round will start tomorrow. This series of bilateral meetings, which is considered as the last stage of the finalization of the preparation of the elections, involves 11 political parties and four national organizations. The dialogue will deal with all the aspects of the presidential elections, including the end of violence.

Zeroual Sees Constitutional Court Installed; Members Listed

LD2603171895 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the supervision of Head of State Liamine Zeroual, the Constitutional Council was installed today in the presence of Mohamed Bechin, the minister adviser to the head of state, and Youcef El Khatib, the political adviser to the head of state.

Here are the names of the members of the Constitutional Council; Mr. Said Bouchair, chairman of the council.

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The members are; Moamar Bouznada, Sadek Laroussi, Abderezzak Zouina, Amar Khila, Amar Bengarah, and Taha Tayar.

Berber Leader Comments on Ending School Boycott

LD2403151695 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Berber 1130 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] We go back to the issue of the Berber Cultural Movement and the end of the schools boycott. Ferhat Mehenni, one of the founders of the Berber Cultural Movement, met the press yesterday and called for an end to the schools boycott. A great deal has been said, apparently conflicting with his remarks at the news conference he gave at the Tahar Djaout press house .

Mehenni said it was true he called for an end to the boycott on condition that the government accepts the setting up of a national council for Tamazight [Berber language]. He explained to the Berber radio channel this morning that the national television which covered the event did not fully report what he said. This is was he said when he called us this morning:

[Begin Mehenni recording] Those who watched television yesterday heard me say that I agreed that the children should go back to school, but the television did not report why I said what I said. What I did was to appeal to the government, the Berber Cultural Movement, the pupils' parents, and students for the setting up of a national council of Tamazight. If this is agreed by the government and by our movement, then I agree to the end of the school boycott. I would not agree to it under any other conditions.

The talks with the government and the prime minister are continuing. We will go back to the negotiations next week to find out whether the government agrees. In the meantime, I call on all those who are jealous of Tamazight and love Tamazight, the country, and our children to see whether we obtained guarantees, so those who are taking the baccalaureat exam, and indeed all students, do not lose the academic year. [passage omitted]

I invite all those who are involved in this issue to make their views clear on the call I made. This call is supported by some officials of the [Berber Cultural Movement] national commissions and the [Berber Cultural Movement] national coordinating body, the MCA [expansion unknown], and some representatives of the Mizab region [southern Algeria]. I have made this call so we can put the fire out and avoid a worsening of the situation. [end recording]

850 Million Dollars of Debts With Italy Rescheduled

LD2603135595 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Algerian Central Bank has announced that an agreement on rescheduling Algerian public debts to Italy estimated at 850 million U.S. dollars was concluded this morning in Algiers.

This agreement, which was signed by the governor of the Algerian Bank Mr. Abdelwahab Karamane and the Italian ambassador in Algiers, comes as complementary to the agreement of June 94 with Paris Club about the overall rescheduling of Algerian public debts.

The same source added that this agreement comes to crown a series of bilateral agreements which Algeria was to sign with the 19 members of Paris Club within the framework of the rescheduling agreement signed in June 1994.

Egypt

Musa Considering Resignation Over Nuclear Dispute

TA2403201495 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 24 Mar 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa is considering resigning, according to reports which have recently reached Jerusalem. Our political correspondent reports that the reasons for this are sharp differences with President Husni Mubarak against the background of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and Musa's refusal to stop criticizing Israel on the issue.

Musa—No Israeli Reply to NPT Proposals

NC2503112995 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1110 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stressed that Egypt has not received an Israeli reply to Egyptian proposals on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT].

Musa told reporters today that the Egyptian position remains the same regarding the extension of the NPT and commitment to the Arab League Council's resolution, which rejects the existing situation as it constitutes a serious imbalance threatening the region's security and stability, which is unacceptable.

The foreign minister stressed the existence of an Arab position on this matter, as demonstrated by the Arab League Council's resolution issued at the end of its meeting. The resolution, he added, affirms the Arab commitment regarding the extension of the treaty.

Nuclear Chief Opposes Indefinite Treaty Extension

NC2703120195 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 21 Mar 95 pp 1, 6

[Report by 'Adil al-Bahnasawi]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an exclusive statement to AL-SHA'B, Dr. Hafiz Hijji, chairman of the Nuclear

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Stations Authority, has stated that the United States is putting on the pressure to force states to vote for an indefinite extension of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty next month.

Hijji said an indefinite extension poses a threat to Egypt because we have not yet implemented the peaceful nuclear program to generate electricity. There are attempts to put pressure on us in this regard. And I do not know what price they will give us.

Hijii noted that the advisory committee has submitted its report, which explains the ramifications of an indefinite extension, a 25- year extension, and a 10-year extension. The diplomats must press against an indefinite extension. He explained that Egypt and the Arab states must work to ensure that the provisions of the agreement that have been ignored so far are implemented. They are:

—The nuclear states must guarantee the protection of the nonnuclear states.

—The states that possess nuclear weapons, other than the big five powers, must get rid of their nuclear weapons. The big powers must substantially reduce their weapons.

—The peaceful use of nuclear power must be affirmed and the advanced states must support the developing states.

Mubarak, Burkinabe Head Meet; Musa Comments

NC2603134795 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak and Bukinabe President Blaise Compaore held a round of bilateral talks this afternoon at the presidential headquarters after President Compaore arrived in Cairo. President Mubarak received him at the airport and then accompanied him to the presidential headquarters where he was given the official reception ceremony.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa stated after the round of talks ended that the Burkina Faso president's visit falls within the framework of bolstering bilateral relations and Egyptian-African relations in general. 'Amr Musa said relations between Presidents Mubarak and Compaore are very close and strong and that there is active technical cooperation between Egypt and Burkina Faso.

Discuss African 'Problems'

NC2603193995 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Husni Mubarak held more talks this evening at the presidential headquarters with Burkinabe President Blaise Compaore. They discussed conditions on the African continent in general, and economic and social conditions in Africa in particular, including ways to bolster bilateral relations in the various fields. They viewed a number of other African problems as well. [passage omitted]

Economic, Other Agreements Signed

NC2703114895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0942 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 27 Mar (MENA)—Egypt and Burkina Faso signed three agreements today on cooperation in the commercial, economic, cultural, technical, and scientific spheres. The signing took place at the Presidential Palace in Heliopolis and was witnessed by President Muhammad Husni Mubarak and Blaise Compaore.

The first agreement, pertaining to commercial cooperation, was signed by Egyptian Economy Minister Mahmud Muhammad Mahmud and Burkinabe Foreign Minister Ablasse Ouedraogo.

The second, on the establishment of a joint committee for economic and technical cooperation, was signed by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and the Burkinabe foreign minister.

The two foreign ministers also signed an agreement on bilateral cultural, artistic, and scientific cooperation. [passage omitted]

Joint Communique Issued

NC2703114795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0940 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 27 Mar (MENA)—Egypt and Burkina Faso have stated that they welcome the agreements signed by the Palestinians and Israel and also by Jordan and Israel.

Presidents Husni Mubarak and Blaise Compaore appealed to the parties involved in the peace process to demonstrate their mutual understanding so that they can establish a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East.

In a joint communique marking the conclusion of the Burkinabe president's visit to Cairo today, the two presidents encouraged the Syrian-Israeli negotiations.

President Compaore praised President Mubarak's efforts to reconcile the positions of the negotiating parties.

Presidents Mubarak and Compaore stressed the importance of proclaiming Africa as a continent free of weapons of mass destruction.

The Burkinabe president declared his support for President Mubarak's initiative to turn the Middle East into a region free of weapons of mass destruction.

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The two presidents asserted their commitment to Arab-African cooperation and urged Arab and African leaders to reinvigorate the institutions established for this purpose.

The two presidents expressed satisfaction with the close cooperation between the OAU and the Organization of the Islamic Conference to which both Egypt and Burkina Faso belong.

They welcomed the holding of the OAU Ministerial Council conference in Cairo to discuss the continent's economic and social problems.

President Compaore praised Mubarak's personal commitment to African economic and social development.

Regarding current conditions in Africa, the two presidents expressed concern about the hotbeds of tension in Somalia, Burundi, Rwanda, and Libya and expressed hope that peace will be established in these countries for the sake of their people's prosperity.

President Mubarak voiced satisfaction with Compaore's mediation among the West African countries and urged him to continue these efforts.

The two presidents expressed their grave concern over the explosive situation in Burundi and addressed an appeal to the concerned parties and the entire Burundian people to seek a formula that will solve their domestic problems in a fraternal, amicable way. They appealed to the international community to back efforts seeking to establish peace and security in this fraternal country.

Presidents Mubarak and Compaore emphasized their wish to develop cooperation between Egypt and Burkina Faso in every sphere. They expressed hope that the protocol signed to form a joint economic and technical cooperation committee will give a strong boost to their economic cooperation.

The two presidents called for summit-level consultations among African countries to guarantee a higher standard of implementing the plan of action approved by Copenhagen's recent social development summit.

They praised the fraternal and amicable atmosphere that prevailed during their talks with each other and the harmony of the two countries' views regarding the issues discussed.

President Compaore invited President Mubarak to visit Burkina Faso. President Mubarak welcomed the prospect of such a visit, noting that its date will be determined via diplomatic channels.

Mozambican Minister Meets Leading Officials

Mubarak Discusses Relations

NC2603134995 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] At noon today, President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received at the presidential headquarters the Mozambican foreign minister, who is currently visiting Cairo. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and the director of the Africa and Middle East Desk at the Mozambican Foreign Ministry. The Mozambican foreign minister said after the meeting that he had informed President Mubarak of the latest developments in Mozambique, particularly since peace was finalized there and the civil war stopped. He said he also informed President Mubarak of the challenges facing the Mozambique Government in the social and economic sectors after the return of stability there. He said the government in Mozambique is trying to maintain internal stability, some aspects of which are drafting a permanent constitution, restoring parliamentary life, forming a national police force, and repatriating the Mozambican refugees who fled to neighboring countries as a result of the civil war.

On relations between Egypt and Mozambique, the Mozambican foreign minister said his country's government wants to expand and bolster these relations in various fields. He said he will take the opportunity of his visit to Egypt to meet with a number of Egyptian officials to discuss how to bolster bilateral relations and cooperation.

Musa Views Cooperation

NC2503123995 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1210 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met today with Mozambican Foreign Minister Leonardo Simao who is currently visiting Cairo to take part in the extraordinary round of the African countries foreign ministers meeting, which starts the day after tomorrow, Monday [27 March] at the Conferences Hall in Madinat al-Nasr, to discuss the economic and social conditions in the African continent.

During the meeting, they signed an agreement on setting up a joint committee for cooperation between the two countries' governments to be headed by the two foreign ministers. The objective of this committee is to bolster economic, social, cultural, media, agricultural, scientific, technical, and political cooperation to realize bilateral mutual interests.

Musa, Libyan Minister Discuss Nuclear Issue

NC2503213395 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today met with Jum'ah al-Fazzani, secretary of Libya's General People's Committee for unity. They discussed Arab developments in the consultations between the two countries. The Libyan official stressed the importance of further common Arab action so that the Arab nation can confront existing challenges. He stressed that the viewpoints of Egypt and Libya are identical concerning the renewal of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

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Libyan Minister Hurt in Accident; Source Comments

NC2403132295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1250 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 24 Mar (MENA)—An official source has commented on an announcement about an accident befalling Libyan Industry Minister Dr. Fathi Bin-Shatwan while crossing the Libyan- Egyptian border en route to Damascus. The source stated that the accident [not further specified] did not occur inside the Egyptian border, therefore the Libyan minister was not transferred to an Egyptian hospital for treatment.

Yesterday the Libyan Embassy in Damascus issued a statement saying that Dr. Shatwan sustained spinal fractures in the accident and is being treated at an Egyptian hospital.

Economic Cooperation Discussed With PRC Team

NC2603145695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1335 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 26 Mar (MENA)—Dr. Yusuf Butrus Ghali, minister of state for international cooperation, conferred today with Wu Yi, Chinese minister of foreign trade and economic cooperation, who is currently visiting Egypt as chairman of the Chinese side at the meetings of the Egyptian-Chinese joint trade committee.

During the meeting, the two sides signed an agreement under which China will offer the Egyptian government a grant of 2 million yuan (approximately $305,000) to be used in supplying equipment and experts to Mubarak's city of scientific research and technology. The two sides also discussed ways to promote bilateral economic and technical cooperation and the possibility of setting up a joint corporation to build a hotel at the Cairo Conference Center. Egypt's share in the company would be covered by the remaining balance from the Chinese loan previously given to the Egyptian Government.

They also discussed the possibility of setting up some service projects, such as a power plant at Hawwarat 'Adlan in al-Fayyum Governorate, as well as a supply of Chinese equipment and machinery for the small projects set up in the new industrial zones. The two sides agreed to encourage exchanges of visits by officials in both countries, as well as exchanges of expertise, particularly in the fields of economics, export development, and the transfer of modern technology. They also agreed to encourage Chinese investors to set up projects in Egypt.

Security Forces Operations Kill 'Terrorists'

Two Killed in Upper Egypt

NC2503122595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1145 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Mar (MENA)—State Security Intelligence forces today killed two of the most dangerous terrorist elements in Upper Egypt. The incident took place at the cemetery in the village of Hiw in Naj' Hammadi, Qina Governorate.

A responsible security source has stated that the two terrorists are Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hamid Na'im and Ahmad Isma'il Marzuq Mustafa. The source noted that information received by the State Security Intelligence Department indicated that some fugitive organization [not further specified] members that had taken part in recent incidents in Qina were using the cemetery of Hiw village of Naj' Hammadi as a shelter and a base for carrying out their terrorist operations. The source added that when the security troops cordoned off the area, they came under a hail of bullets. After sending several warnings, the troops returned the fire, killing two of the leading members of the organization.

The security source noted that the terrorist Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hamid Na'im, who used the code name Majdi, was unemployed and resided in Markaz Abu Tisht. He was an active element wanted for arrest for taking part in several incidents. The second terrorist Ahmad Isma'il Marzuq Mustafa, who used the code name Midhat, was a student at Education College in Suhaj University. He was one of the most active extremist elements responsible for liaison and conveying instructions for carrying out operations against policemen. He participated in carrying out some of them and was wanted in connection with some recent terrorist incidents.

Two 7.62-mm rifles, bearing the serial numbers 3992 and 292516, were found in their possession to which magazines containing bullets were attached. In addition, 35 shells and a passport in the name of terrorist Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hamid Na'im were found.

Two Killed in Counter Ambush

NC2503133495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1228 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Mar (MENA)—Two terrorists were killed in the region of al-'Idwah in al-Minya, Upper Egypt, when they tried to attack and ambush some security forces in an ambush they set up near the agricultural area in the village of al- Dafaniyah [place name as received]. A responsible security source at the Interior Ministry today stated that on Friday [24 March] evening, when forces consisting of a number of security men from al- Minya and the central security department of one of al-'Idwah's directorates, were returning to base, they discovered an ambush by some terrorists who started firing at them. The forces responded immediately to the source of fire.

The clash resulted in the death of the two terrorists. These are 'Amr Muhammad Husayn Muhammad, one of the most prominent terrorists in al-'Idwah and who is wanted in administrative case number 226/95 at Markaz al-'Idwah in which First Warrant Officer 'Ali Rushdi

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Muhammad from the State Security Investigations Department of al- Minya was martyred.

The second terrorist was 'Isam Ahmad Sa'd, born in 1965 from the village of al-Basqalun in Markaz al-'Idwah also one of the prominent members among the terrorists who is wanted in administrative case number 360/95 of Markaz al-'Idwah.

Information reveals that the above-mentioned terrorists took part in many recent terrorist incidents in al-Minya.

The forces found the above-mentioned terrorists in possession of a number of automatic weapons, ammunition, and explosives. They are:

Automatic rifle of the 7, 62 and 39 calibre bearing the numbers 37199, and 100 automatic bullets of the same calibre.

An explosive device weighing 1 kilogram made from TNT and 16 bags inside which was some material, which is thought to be explosives weighing between 100 and 1000 grams. These are currently being tested by explosives' experts.

The General Prosecution Department has been informed to start investigating the case. Criminal laboratory and explosives' experts will inspect the weapons that have been seized from the two terrorists and compare them with weapons used in previous cases.

Fugitive Killed in Bani Suwayf

NC2503183595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1805 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 25 Mar (MENA)—The State Security Intelligence forces eliminated today one of the leading active terrorist elements in a residential apartment in Hayy al-Zuhur in Bani Suwayf city. The terrorist, Khalid Hamdi Yusuf Karim, was a leading fugitive terrorist wanted in a number of cases.

This was stated by a responsible security source tonight. It said: Based on the security organs' plan to chase the fugitive terrorist elements which recently committed a number of incidents in Upper Egypt, the hideout of the above-mentioned terrorist was pinpointed and encircled by the security forces. When the terrorist saw the forces he opened fire on them, thus prompting the security forces to shoot and kill him. They found with a him a 9 mm pistol, a quantity of bullets, and a number of important organizational documents. [passage omitted]

Police Arrest, Torture Anti-Israel Demonstrators

NC2603183995 Paris AFP in English 1531 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, March 26 (AFP)—Egyptian police have arrested 37 militants and tortured many of them for protesting against Israel's participation in the Cairo Fair, the Nasirite Arab Democratic Party said Sunday [26 March].

Most were detained Wednesday and Friday during demonstrations at a Cairo university and the fair itself, said the party.

The Nasirites, named after late president Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir, released a list of the 37 people, who included Islamic activists, Marxists and other left-wingers.

"The Egyptian people refuses all normalization with the Zionists," Nasirite party general secretary Diya' al-Din Dawud told a press conference.

The Egyptian Organization for Human Rights demanded the immediate release of the detainees saying as well as beatings, some had been subjected to electric shocks.

It said police broke up peaceful protests and those arrested had now been remanded in custody for 15 days.

The organization called for an end to a ban on demonstrations in force since the assassination of Anwar al-Sadat in 1981.

Israel had not taken part in the fair since the murder of a Jewish woman there in 1986, but this year 24 firms from the Jewish state are attending.

Egypt became the first Arab country to sign peace with the Jewish state in 1979.

Two Sentries Killed, 2 Wounded in Al-Minya

NC2603160295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1510 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 26 Mar (MENA)—Two sentries were martyred and two others were wounded when unidentified assailants fired on the office of the head of Qilya village, Markaz Mallawi, in the Upper Egyptian Governorate of al-Minya.

A responsible Interior Ministry source said that at approximately 1130 this morning, unidentified assailant fired on the aforementioned office. As a result, sentries Hasan Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hadi and Muhammad 'Awad Hasan were martyred and sentries Rajab 'Abd-al-Badi' and Kamal Muhammad Khalifah were wounded and taken to the hospital for treatment.

Leading security officials and criminal laboratory experts in al-Minya went to the scene of the incident for an inspection. The police are continuing to seek the assailants. The prosecution has been informed to start an investigation.

Policeman Dies From Wounds

NC2403134995 Paris AFP in English 1152 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Al-Minya, Egypt, March 24 (AFP)—A policeman died Friday [24 March] after an

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attack by Islamic militants in which two other policemen were seriously wounded in the troubled al-Minya region of southern Egypt.

Police said three militants fired at 'Ali Muhammad Bakhit, 23, and his colleagues Thursday as they guarded a building in Bani Mazar, some 250 kilometres (150 miles) south of Cairo.

The attackers fled after stealing the policemen's guns, the police said.

The latest death raised to 687 the number of people killed in unrest since militants unleashed a violent campaign in March 1992 aimed at toppling the secular government of President Husni Mubarak.

Arab League's Role in Arab Reconciliation Viewed

NC2403203595 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 24 Mar 95

[Commentary by Ahmad Sha'ban: "The Arab League and Arab Reconciliation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As the Arab League begins a new year of shouldering its responsibilities for the Arab causes and peoples, we discover that the Arab citizen is primarily preoccupied with two issues. The first issue is what should be our stance on signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. In its final statement, the Arab League stated that excepting Israel from the treaty's signatories poses a threat to the region's security and peace. It called for clearing the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction on the grounds that this is a basic pillar of the region's stability and security. Therefore we can regard this declaration as a unified Arab stance on this matter. It is in complete agreement with Egypt's declarations on the issue, which enjoy general Arab backing and which stress the need for Israel to sign the treaty so that the Arab countries can also sign.

The second issue is the urgent need for Arab reconciliation, which continues to preoccupy all the region's countries, each of which is seeking to resolve it in its own way. It is important to note here the efforts by the Arab League and its secretary general to solve this matter, clear up inter-Arab differences, and achieve the desired Arab solidarity so that we can better handle the challenges confronting us.

We are not here concerned with the sincere efforts by several Arab leaders in this context, notably President Husni Mubarak. We are trying to find a sound method of achieving reconciliation.

There is broad support for the Arab League's determination that there should be frank Arab exchanges before reconciliation is reached.

This brings us back to the original question of how to begin talking frankly about issues in order to reconcile. We should note at this point that all the Arab countries sympathize completely with the Iraqi people. President Mubarak made this clear when he declared that it is necessary to find a way to end the Iraqi people's hardships. The Arab Gulf countries, during a meeting of their foreign ministers in Riyadh a few days ago, proclaimed full sympathy with the Iraqi people. Indeed Kuwait itself, in the words of more than one official, confirmed this sympathy. Everyone agrees that the responsibility for what is happening to the Iraqi people should be laid at the door of the ruling regime, because it persists in refusing to abide fully by the UN Security Council resolutions. Consequently the sanctions, from which the entire Iraqi nation suffers, continue.

Over the past few years the Arab League has been unrelenting in its efforts to find solutions to the problems that still cast a dark shadow on the relations between Kuwait and Iraq as a result of the August 1990 events. It is true that these efforts have not yet succeeded in solving all these problems. Nevertheless some results have been achieved.

After refusing to do so for some time, Iraq finally recognized the UN's demarcation of its border with Kuwait. In order to build a bridge of trust between Iraq on one side and Kuwait and the other Gulf countries on the other, Iraq must be committed to implementing the UN resolutions because the Gulf countries are still suspicious of the Iraqi regime's intentions and will be so as long as it does not fully abide by the UN resolutions.

Hence, we think that the Arab League has a special role to play. It must continue to try to settle unresolved issues and entrench the principle of frankness in order to make the issues clear to everyone and heal the wounds that the Arab homeland sustained as a result of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Egypt, backed by the Arab League, has always asserted that it is necessary to abide by the UN resolutions in order to clear up Arab differences and achieve Arab reconciliation.

Although some dark clouds continue to beset Arab relations, we are fully confident that the efforts of sincere Arab leaders and the Arab League can achieve reconciliation on solid foundations that can guarantee its permanence.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Meets Peoples' Leaders in Banghazi

LD2703091795 Tripoli JANA in English 0858 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, Al Rabie [March] 27, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Reaffirming total adherence to the principles and objectives of the Great Al Fatih Revolution, determined for action to entrench people's power, the power of all people, reiterating allegiance to the leader, declaring defiance to the embargo, embodying the eternal cohesion between the leader and the masses, the leader of the revolution met

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with the popular leaders in the Banghazi area who met him with chants reaffirming their commitment to carry on building up the exemplary Jamahiriyah, entrenching the people's power and realising progress on the Libyan Arab land.

The popular leaders stressed, thanks to the revolution and the leader, their ability for defiance, continuing the realisation of the achievements being the bridges of transit from backwardness to progress and realisation of freedom for mankind through the third universal theory being a policy for action on the Libyan Arab land.

The leader of the revolution addressed the popular masses highlighting their tasks and responsibilities for the mobilisation of the masses to confront the enemies of the nation and entrench the people's power.

The popular leaders in Banghazi area made a welcoming speech reiterating their pledge of loyalty to the leader of the revolution declaring that they will remain the loyal soldiers of the Great Al Fateh Revolution and its leader.

The popular leaders presented bouquets of flowers to the leader as an expression of loyalty and pride in the maker of its victories.

Experts, under the auspices of the popular leaders, presented their studies and research which they carried out for the realisation of progress in the area of Banghazi area and the exploitation of all resources to achieve this sought after goal.

Lawyer Issues Statement on Lockerbie Suspects

[Quotation marks as recieved]

LD2503094895 Tripoli JANA in English 0900 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, Al-Rabia [March] 25, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—In a further step aimed at reversing facts, persisting in distortion, disregarding international laws, conventions and treaties and mocking human rights, the American Administration issued a statement concerning the two Libyan suspects in the so-called Lockerbie case. Replying to this, the lawyer of the two Libyans made the following statement to JANA:

"News agencies reported that the American Justice Department had issued a statement saying that the F.B.I at the American Justice Department in Washington on Thursday 23 Al Rabia 1424 [23 March 1995] issued a statement declaring that the names of the two Libyan suspects in the case of the Pan Am airliner flight 103 over Lockerbie in 1988 were put on the list of ten wanted people. The F.B.I. allocated a reward for any person who may provide information leading to the arrest of the two men whom the F.B.I claimed to be Libyan intelligence officers. Also the F.B.I claimed that it has put the information regarding the wanted people 'just like that' in the Internet system enabling information to be obtained by computer from throughout the world regarding the two accused men etc.

This is as if the Libyan judicial authorities did not claim their direct judicial jurisidiction in conformity with the Libyan Arab law, which is like all laws in the world, granting jurisidiction to the Libyan judicial authorities. Furthermore this jurisidiction is provided for in the second and third paragraphs of Article 5 of the Montreal Accord of 1971. And as if the starting by the Libyan Arab judicial authorities to exercise their jurisdiction over the case, an obligation required by international accords and established norms of international law, was not an impediment to the claim of looking for fugitives and also as if there was no impediment to requesting extradition. And didn't American Justice Department demanded the extradition in the past requesting the extradition from the Libyan Arab authorities. Wasn't this sufficient for the American Justice Department, its departments and organs affiliated to it to stop claiming ignorance about the whereabouts of the two Libyan nationals or is this reward aimed at encouraging kidnapping and piracy which are terrorist acts. Therefore where are the establishemd norms of international law and the rule of law in this contract which the U.N had declared as a contract for the rule of law and international law between states and nations instead of the resort to the use of force and encouraging kidnapping and piracy.

The Libyan Arab judicial Arab authorities did not only start exercising their judicial jurisidiction only but they have began to implement [words indistinct] Article 6 of the Montreal Accord on investigations and making the two Libyan suspects available at all times. Accordingly, the Libyan Arab judicial authorities informed the concerned authorities and America and U.K about these measures requesting their cooperation in accordance with Article 11 of this accord. Thus the two Libyans are living in a normal way in their own country. They have a known address. The action declared by the statement of the American Justice Department constitutes a mockery of human rights and the truth. It also mocks the intelligence of others. This action is aimed at encouraging acts of kidnapping, piracy and terrorism in implementation of the law of the jungle in countering the rule of law which the Libyan Arab authorities have been keen to observe.

The dispute is about judicial competence (judicial jurisidiction), extradition and it is about cooperation between the judicial authorities in accordance with the interpretation and application of the 1971 Montreal Accord which may be considered by the International Court of Justice.

America has sought to implicate the Security Council by adopting resolutions in legal disputes which Article 36/3 of the Charter states that if an issue is submitted to the council concerning legal disputes it should refer the parties to the International Court of Justice.

America having sought to implicate the Security Council not only in violating the charter but also in established

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rules of international laws and international accords, here it is today and before the whole world showing another act which embodies the real plight of international law. It is a catastrophe and tragedy for the concept of the rule of law and human rights.

The two Libyan Arabs are not fugitives. They are at the disposal of the Libyan Arab judicial authorities which have taken action in accordance with the Libyan Arab national law, the 1971 Montreal Accord and establishing rules of international law. The two Libyan Arabs did not refrain from demanding a fair trial for they are totally keen to challenge before the whole world the groundless allegations against them. But they are totally keen for the trial to be at a neutral place providing them with the safeguards of a fair trial and before an impartial jury. Also they are attached to their human rights including (the assumption of innocence and affording them the right of defence and fair trial) in conformity with comprehensive and impartial investigations.

At time the world is discussing today the possiblity of achieving these legitimate demands, the American Justice Department's statement emerges so as to destroy any possibility for a just solution in accordance with the rule of law and legitimate rights in accordance with the human rights principles.

The world should stand witness for this new chapter of confrontation between our adherence to the force of law and others confronting us on the basis of power-mania and encouragement of piracy, kidnapping and terrorism.

Nuri-Shahrudi Meets With Iranian Ambassador

LD2603152895 Tehran IRNA in English 1511 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 26, IRNA—In a meeting in Tripoli on Saturday [25 March] with the Libyan Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Majid al-Qa'ud, the Iranian Ambassador to Libya Mohammad Reza Nuri-Shahrudi handed over an invitation letter from Iran's First Vice-President Hasan Habibi.

In his invitation letter Habibi has invited the Libyan premier to pay a visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In the meeting, al-Qa'ud welcomed the invitation and praised the stances of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its leadership.

"I am sure that the Iranian leadership is thoroughly honest in his policies and he wants to serve Islam," al-Qa'ud underlined.

Expressing his support for the presence of the Iranian companies and institutions in the Libyan market, al-Qa'ud added that his country gives a priority to its economic cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Reportage on Visit of Russia's Zhirinovskiy

Criticizes UN Sanctions

LD2603105595 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0945 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tripoli, 26 Mar (JANA)—Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, has reiterated his party's support for and solidarity with the Great Jamahiriyah in its confrontation with the unjust sanctions imposed on it by Western powers through the so-called the UN Security Council.

In a statement to JANA upon his arrival in Tripoli last night, Zhirinovskiy added that during his visit he will study the model being implemented in the Great Jamahiriyah and to implement it in Russia. He insisted, furthermore, that the visit would bolster the countries' relations in the economic, political, and cultural areas.

He pointed out, however, that his visit would allow him and his delegation to acquaint themselves with the colossal and first rate achievements of the Al-Fatih revolution.

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, expressed his happiness and that of his delegation at being in the Great Jamahiriyah.

Meets With GPC Secretary

[Quotation marks as received]

LD2603192695 Tripoli JANA in English 1903 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, al Rabia [March] 26, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The secretary of the General People's Congress [GPC] made a speech welcoming the leader of the Russian Liberal democratic Party, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, and the delegation in his company who are currently on a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah. He lauded the good relations linking the two friendly countries.

He said 'our relations in the last 3,5 [as received] decades have been enhanced further since the advent of the great al-Fatih revolution which found before it in 1969 a heavy legacy of internal problems which required a radical and speedy solutions. This did not abrogate Libya's ties with the outside world. In fact it has founded its foreign policy on new basis including mutual benefit and constructive cooperation within the context of solidarity and mutual respect in a manner which may help consolidate international peace and security.

He asserted 'thus the USSR at the time was at the forefront of the countries which Libya was keen to have distinguished relations with. That was achieved and relations between our two countries grew steadily since early seventies, cooperation soared between the two countries so much so that Libya became at the top of the list of the African and developing countries in terms of

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the size of cooperation and trade exchange with your friendly country. After the changes which took place in late 1991, the Great Jamahiriyah continued its relations with the Russian Federation as an extension of relations with the USSR. Accordingly, contacts continued between the two sides at all levels so as to consolidate the existing cooperation and consolidate it and seek new ways to expand its scope.

The forefront of these contacts the letters exchanged between the leader of the revolution and President Yeltsin and the letters exchanged between the secretary of the General People's Committee for foreign liaison and international cooperation and the Russian Federation's foreign minister.

He pointed out that within the last two years, a number of visits were exchanged at various levels during which agreement was reached on developing existing cooperation for the mutual benefit of the two countries, continuing dialogue and cooperation to overcome the circumstantial obstacles which may prevent achieving this goal.

He declared 'we believe that this visit will contribute towards the consolidation of relations between our two countries for the high position enjoyed by you personally and your party in parliament and at the popular and official levels in your friendly country. We highly appreciate this move on your part and we wish you a good stay amongst your friends in the Great Jamahiriyah and for your talks success in favour of our two friendly peoples.

Praises Country's 'Genuine Democracy'

LD2703085195 Tripoli JANA in English 0816 GMT 27 Mar 95

[Quotation marks as received]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli al-Rabia [March] 27, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the leader of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party [LDPR], lauded the [word indistinct] achievements realised in the Great Jamahiriyah thanks to the great Al-Fatih revolution.

In a speech during a dinner banquet laid in his honour by the secretariat of the General People's Congress on Saturday night, Zhirinovskiy asserted that these colossal achievements were realised in the Great Jamahiriyah under the leadership of the leader of the revolution Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

He commended the direct democracy being applied by the Libyan Arab people. He said that this genuine democracy did not exist in the West or the East.

The leader of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party expressed admiration for the firm resolve and determination of the people of the Great Jamahiriyah in achieving development and progress on its soil.

He stressed the Libyan Arab people is achieving success with full power, He lauded the efforts being undertaken by the Great Jamahiriyah at the international level. He added 'this gave the Great Jamahiriyah a good and appropriate position in the world.

He referred to the Libyan Arab-Russian bilateral relations. He stressed the need to enhance these relations in all fields for the benefit of the Libyan Arab people and the Russian people. He pointed out 'we welcome to have good relations between our two countries and bring them to a higher level.

He expressed his pleasure and that of the delegation in his company of visiting the Great Jamahiriyah. He said 'we hope that this visit will consolidate the good relations which exist between the Great Jamahiriyah and Russia.'

Morocco

Filali on Summit Improbability, Lockerbie

MM2703110795 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 Mar 95 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Filali Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Arab Summit Still Farfetched"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Moroccan Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdellatif Filali has stated that, because of the situation in the Arab region, the question of holding an Arab summit conference is still farfetched.

In an exclusive statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Filali said that the Arab code of honor called for by Egyptian President Husni Mubarak the day before yesterday contains many positive points which could be used as a basis in the Arab reconciliation process.

He said that Morocco is working with its Arab brothers to strengthen and rejuvenate the Arab League. He referred to King Hassan II's statement about the importance of renewing the Arab League's mechanism so that it can shoulder its responsibilities in connection with the current Arab problems.

He called for an Arab strategy to tackle political and economic issues and put an end to the Arab world's current crisis. The Moroccan minister stressed the importance of amending the Arab League charter in harmony with international changes and developments.

Filali said that the United States does not agree to the trial of the Lockerbie suspects by a neutral court. He said that King Hassan discussed that matter during his visit to the United States because of the repercussions of the embargo imposed on Libya, and that he supported the Libyan position but the U.S. position did not change.

He confirmed that the seven-member committee concerned with resolving the Lockerbie crisis is continuing its work and that all Arab efforts are being kept within the context of that committee, which held a meeting at the Arab League the day before yesterday, and that the

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Arab League secretary general will submit a comprehensive report to the United Nations on all aspects of the situation.

Foreign Ministry Gives Response on Sahara Issue

LD2603235495 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] This week has been marked by the reaction of the Foreign Ministry to the European parliament's endorsement of a recommendation in connection with the issue of the Moroccan Sahara.

The aforementioned parliament went far in accusing Morocco of procrastinating in implementing the UN settlement plan and of maneuvering to obstruct it.

This provocative recommendation on the Moroccan Sahara had backgrounds instigated by the interests of the EU countries. To verify clearly these backgrounds, it is sufficient to enquire about the reason for this campaign against Morocco, particularly at this time.

The Foreign Ministry issued a statement in this respect, which considered the European parliament's recommendation baseless and indicated evil intentions that did give honor to this European institution.

The position expressed by the European parliament was a biased stance and simply aimed at obstructing and thwarting the settlement plan.

The statement added that consecutive reports by the UN secretary general, and the public statement of high-ranking UN and MINURSO officials refuted such a statement. [passage omitted]

The statement recalled the maneuvers carried out, and were still being carried out, by the other side to cause confusion to the UN settlement plan, either by delaying it, or thwarting it. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Army Claims Capture of Riak Machar Headquarters

EA2603135295 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] We have just received the following statement from the general command of the Armed Forces. [passage omitted]:

After your Armed Forces decisively [sentence as heard]. After the battle of honor against the movement of the agent rebel Garang and his supporters at Kapoeta town, inflicting on them a decisive defeat so that their movement became a refugee movement, our fighting sons of the Armed Forces and the Popular Defense, with the steadiness of heroes and the courage of believers, have now liberated the town of al-Nasir and made the calls of prayers in its skies late this afternoon 24 Shawwal 1415 A.H. corresponding to 25 March 1995.

This was in fulfilment of the oath they took and the trust they bore to ensure the safety of Sudan and its security. Let the group of Riak Machar, who broke his pledge and preferred to be a tool for the splitting of Sudan [as heard], know that its wager is lost and its fate is extinction. Thus your Armed Forces have ensured peace inside the town of al-Nasir and the area of the Sobat River Basin. There will be a great return of the citizens scattered by the rebel movement. God is great, glory to Sudan. God is great and glory to the Armed Forces. May the eyes of the cowards never rest.

SSIM: Loss of al-Nasir Only 'Technical' Pullout

AB2603203395 London BBC World Service in English 1705 GMT 26 Mar 95

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The announcement late last night that the Sudanese Government had captured the town of al-Nasir brought thousands onto the streets of Khartoum in celebration. Al-Nasir, in Upper Nile Province, had been the original headquarters of the SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Army] faction lead by Riak Machar. The al-Nasir faction, now called the Southern Sudan Independence Movement, SSIM, had held the town for the last couple of years. On the line to Nairobi, Barnaby Phillips asked SSIM spokesman Daniel Matthews if the fall of al-Nasir was a major setback.

[Begin recording] [Matthews] Well, someone may say that it is a major setback, but you know that we are a guerrilla movement, and the fact that we have made a technical withdrawal from al-Nasir town, because it became vulnerable by bombardment—even by airforce bombardment—and we had to make a technical withdrawal, it is not a setback, (?a really very bad) setback. It is just the way the war goes on.

[Phillips] What kind of casualties were you suffering?

[Matthews] Well, human casualties, of course, and destruction of land and property. And, there is a lot of casualty from the civilian population due to the crossfire, and there is a lot of looting, raping, and destruction of property all over the area by the mujahedeen.

[Phillips] Do you have any idea how many civilians might have been killed in the takeover of al-Nasir?

[Matthews] It goes into hundreds.

[Phillips] And, so, what has happened to your soldiers who fled out of al-Nasir? Are they just scattered in the bush now?

[Matthews] They didn't flee out of al-Nasir. They just made a technical withdrawal in the same vicinity of

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al-Nasir, and they are harassing the government forces in al-Nasir itself. There is still fighting going on around there.

[Phillips] There is fighting going on today, Sunday?

[Matthews] Yes.

[Phillips] Do you think you have any prospect of taking this town back?

[Matthews] Well, that is war. It can always change sides. We took it before, and they take it from us, then we can take it again. There is the possibility; why not?

[Phillips] Okay, so this town, al-Nasir, is very close to the Ethiopian border. Have many of the civilians actually fled into Ethiopia out of Sudan?

[Matthews] In thousands, in thousands, they have fled to the border. It is very near, it is about 17 miles from the [word indistinct] of the border. [end recording]

Tunisia

Training, Employment Accord Signed With 'Palestine'

LD2503184995 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A cooperation agreement in the training and employment sphere was signed today in Tunis between Tunisia and the Palestinian National Authority.

This took place during a ceremony presided over by Moncer Rouissi, vocational training and development minister, and Samir Ghushah, labor minister at the Palestinian National Authority.

The two ministers pointed out that the initiative to draw up the agreement represented an important step in laying down the bases for a strong and fruitful cooperation, and preparing for promoting this cooperation to the level of the deep relations that bound the two fraternal peoples, the Tunisian and the Palestinian.

The agreement stipulates the exchange of studies, information, and expertise in connection with developing vocational training and employment, and also exchanging researches, programs, and special studies on the means of directing the youth with the aim of facilitating their training and vocational integration.

The agreement also stipulates for the formation of a joint, specialized technical committee for drawing up executive programs for crystallizing cooperation in the vocational training and employment sphere, regulating the ways and means of implementing these programs, and following up and assessing their results.

President Receives Swedish Foreign Minister

LD2403210895 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali received Swedish Foreign Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallen at Carthage Palace this morning.

The presidency spokesman said that President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali renewed his interest in the distinguished Tunisian-Swedish relations and his eagerness to further bilateral ties, particularly in the field of environment and women's affairs.

The spokesman added that the talks also tackled issues of common interest, especially the peace process in the Middle East. [passage omitted]

New Minister Delegate for Women, Family Appointed

LD2503175895 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali met this morning at Carthage Palace Prime Minister Hamed Karoui, who put before his excellency the president the agenda of the national awareness seminar, due to convene on 28 March, on the talks with the EU. [passage omitted]

In addition, the prime minister said that President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali had decided to appoint Naziha Zarrouk minister delegate to the prime minister in charge of women's and family affairs, to succeed Naziha Mezhoud, who would be called for other duties.

Self-Sufficiency in Natural Gas Expected

LD2403171595 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the field of energy, Miskar gas project—120 km off the southern costs of Safaqis [Sfax—conventional spelling] town—is expected to be the biggest project for hydrocarbon gas exploitation in Tunisia when it is complete, and it will enable Tunisia to be self-sufficient in natural gas.

Due to the importance of this project, the British Gas Corporation has sent a senior official to see the project through. Tawfik Mziou reports:

[Mziou] To follow up the management of the implementation of Miskar field for the production of natural gas which is off the coast of Safaqis, British Gas has sent Mr. Markall, member of the corporation's board of directors, to Safaqis to inspect the projects the corporation is implementing in the region, especially the construction of the Hannibal plant for gas processing and refining in Nekta near Mahares [south of Safaqis] which has started the technical tests phase and is expected to be ready for production next summer, in addition to Cercina field project for oil production in Kerkenna Island. [passage omitted]

The latter British Gas official expressed readiness his corporation to contribute in building an automatic center for generating electricity power using the gas extracted from Miskar field for the benefit of the Tunisian gas electricity company. It is worth mentioning that this company has concluded a contract with British Gas Corporation to buy a quantity of gas up to 4.5 million

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cubic meters per day over the first five years of the actual production of Miskar field and 5.7 million cubic meters per day for the following period.

Western Sahara

President Abdelaziz Backs Sahara Referendum

LD1803162095 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 18 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Mohamed Abdelaziz, president of the Saharan [Democratic] Arab Republic, has been to the European Parliament to plead his case. He accuses Morocco of doing everything in its power to undermine the referendum that the United Nations is trying to organize. The European Parliament apparently heard the message delivered by the chief of the Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro], since it has adopted a resolution asking the Moroccan authorities not to hinder the implementation of the peace plan. Mohamed Abdelaziz was interviewed by Ghislaine Dupont.

[Begin recording] [Abdelaziz] I got the feeling that the members of the European parliament are quite keen to see peace reign in the Western Sahara and the UN peace plan implemented as soon as possible, so that a free, fair, and democratic referendum on self-determination can take place.

[Dupont] This referendum has been postponed a number of times since 1991. It is now planned for October 1995. Do you think this time it really could go ahead?

[Abdelaziz] Well, as you know, it depends on the political willingness of the other camp, of the Moroccan Government, naturally—since it has been the Moroccan Government which, up until now, has not wanted a free and democratic referendum. Since 1991, and in flagrant defiance of the initial UN peace plan, they have tried by every means available—and are still trying—to impose some 180,000 Moroccan voters. It is this position taken by the Moroccan Government which has thus far obstructed the UN peace plan. As far as we are concerned, we are willing for the referendum to take place at the earliest opportunity, and I believe the United Nations has taken every step so that this should be done. But the problem is that the Moroccan Government does not want a free and democratic referendum, rather, it hopes to falsify the referendum to legitimize its de facto colonization of the Western Sahara. I hope that, this time, the Moroccan Government will reverse its position and allow the UN and the OAU [Organization of African Unity] to organize the referendum on schedule, that is, next October.

[Dupont] King Hassan II is just ending his visit to the United States. Do you think the Americans might more or less let this particular issue drop, given that it has remained stubbornly unresolved for ages?

[Abdelaziz] In general, the American position—dating from 1991, when the UN peace plan was adopted—and during this entire time, the American position has generally been objective. They have put quite a lot of effort into it. I believe that King Hassan's present visit to the United States may be an opportunity for the Americans to take steps to persuade the Moroccan Government to allow the UN to carry out a democratic referendum.

[Dupont] If the referendum cannot take place by the end of the year, is there a danger that the war could resume?

[Abdelaziz] Yes, I think that if the decolonization process now under way in the Western Sahara—if we get to the point where the Moroccan Government once again aborts this decolonization process, as it did in 1975—that is going to force the Saharan people once again to resume its resistance, to resume its struggle to defend its sacred right to self-determination and to independence, a right that is internationally recognized. As far as we are concerned, as long as the United Nations and the OAU continue to work toward, and act with a view to, the organization of a fair referendum on self- determination, we are going to cooperate fully with those organizations.

[Dupont] Do you worry that the United Nations might withdraw, after so many years of failure?

[Abdelaziz] For 20 years now, the only compromise that has ever been successfully worked out between ourselves and Morocco is the UN peace plan. As you know, this is a plan that not only boasts the two parties' agreement from the start, but also has international support. Clearly, stability and peace in the Maghreb region is an extremely attractive proposition in today's climate. I truly think it would be irresponsible if the United Nations were to withdraw without having first organized a referendum on self-determination that can guarantee peace and stability in the region. [end recording]

Seeks International Help for Plan

LD2003151895 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sahrawi President Mohamed Abdelaziz held a news conference in Algiers today at which he dealt with the latest developments in the Sahrawi issue and the prospects of the UN peace plan for Western Sahara. Our colleague Samir Mabtour attended the conference and sent the following recorded report:

[Mabtour] Sahrawi President Mohamed Abdelaziz in Algiers today made a call for help to the international community to save the Western Sahara peace plan.

At a news conference, the Sahrawi president said that he was afraid that Morocco might deliberately frustrate the UN mission's work in the Western Sahara, and perhaps there would a repetition of the 1975 Madrid agreement which breached the resolutions of the UN General Assembly and other international organizations calling for the elimination of colonialism in the Western Sahara.

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The Sahrawi president noted that the voter identification process, which started last August, is proceeding at a very slow pace, so much so that so far only the identity of 20,000 people has been confirmed out of a total of 235,000 applications submitted to the UN mission. He pointed out that if things continue as they are, the identification process could take nine years, which will make holding the referendum next October [as scheduled] unlikely.

President Mohamed Abdelaziz also noted that the current situation in the occupied territory poses a threat to peace in the region. He expressed his hope that the UN secretary general's next report will include a call for stepping up pressure on Morocco to make it cooperate with the United Nations in facilitating the organization of a free and honest referendum through which the Sahrawi people will decide their destiny; either to join Morocco or to declare independence and live freely and honorably in their land.

Decries Moroccan 'Conspiracy'

LD2203225495 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1102 GMT 22 Mar 95

[Interview with President Mohamed Abdelaziz by Amal Meddah, Chaabane Lounakel, and Ibrahim Ziouadj; date not given; from the weekly "Transformations" program—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Meddah] Ladies and gentlemen, peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you. This week, Transformations hosts Mohamed Abdelaziz, the Saharan president and secretary general of the Polisario Front, to discuss the latest developments in the UN peace plan for Western Sahara. [passage omitted]

Your Excellency the President: We will start the interview with the end of the latest round which yielded, as we learned, a number of initiatives from the members of the European Parliament, represented particularly in the resolution calling on Morocco to carry out its commitments regarding the implementation of the UN peace plan and stop its manoeuvers of impeding the implementation of that peace plan. What are the latest developments in the peace plan in the region, what is the nature of the obstacles to the peace plan, and what are, in your opinion, the main motives for that?

[Abdelaziz] [passage omitted] The thing which is clear in the Moroccan stance is that Morocco wants to turn the UN peace plan, which aims at organizing the referendum for the self-determination of the Saharan people, into an international conspiracy against the self-determination of the Saharan people and consequently an international conspiracy to legalize the Moroccan occupation of Western Sahara. This conspiracy aims consequently at depriving the Saharan people of the legitimacy of his self-determination and struggle. This Moroccan stance still impedes the progress of the UN peace plan in Western Sahara.

[Meddah] As you said, your excellency the president, that was mentioned by some movements supporting the Saharan cause at the European Parliament, with regard particularly to the identification of Saharan voters. Do you not consider that that observation, [made at the European Parliament], is an accusation levelled at the UN mission which is concerned with the progress of the operation of finalizing the list of Saharan voters. Is the mission unable to overcome those obstacles?

[Abdelaziz] I think that in this respect, the clearest evidence is the statement of the U.S. ambassador, Frank Ruddy, who occupied the post of number two of MINURSO [UN Mission For The Referendum in Western Sahara] for a year, worked at the mission's headquarters in Laayoune, dealt with the Moroccan and Saharan sides, supervised the management of MINURSO, and had a full and comprehensive knowledge of all matters. He gave his clear testimony last January before the U.S. Congress. In this testimony, he in fact shows the practices and conspiracies of the Moroccan Government against the work of MINURSO. They also show MINURSO's weakness in facing the Moroccan maneuvers. [passage omitted]

We expect that the UN Security Council will rectify MINURSO's weakness in particular as soon as possible.

[Meddah] Brother Chaabane has a question to put to you.

[Lounakel] Mr. President: On the basis of the UN secretary general's report after his tour in the region, the Security Council adopted a resolution in mid-December last year on the preparation and organization of the referendum in Western Sahara. The referendum was scheduled to take place in November this year. However, in view of the limited material resources at the disposal of MINURSO, such as voting centers and others, as well as the obstacles placed by Morocco in the way of the organization's work, in your opinion, would it be possible to organize the referendum for November considering the course of the process of preparing for the referendum?

[Abdelaziz] Indeed, after the secretary general's visit to the region at the end of last year he submitted his report to the Security Council in which he mentioned next November as the date for holding the referendum. However, we have seen that since August last year the voter identification mission, or commission, of MINURSO started to receive the citizens who had applied to be registered in the voters list. [passage omitted]

Morocco is playing for time, and has been doing everything it can to obstruct the process under any pretext. Therefore, bearing in mind the manner in which Morocco is behaving, I think it is very unlikely that all the arrangements, particularly those concerning voter identification, will be completed to enable the United Nations to organize a referendum in October [as heard, question refers to November]

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As far the the Saharan side is concerned, we are prepared and ready. We will cooperate with the United Nations in observing the deadline. However, from a practical point of view, if the situation remains the same, and the method remains the same, I think it would be unlikely that the referendum will be held in October.

[Lounakel] It is noticeable that Morocco is playing for time and may be seeking to put back the referendum or any form of solution as late as possible. In this case what are the possible options to induce Morocco to respect its international commitments particularly when the issue of the Saharan people enjoys international legitimacy?

[Abdelaziz] Naturally, what is clear in the Moroccan stance is that it will either succeed in organizing a false referendum and consequently bypass the Saharan people's legitimate right to self-determination through a referendum in which the majority of the voters would be Moroccans—or, if that does not happen, the United Nations has to withdraw without organizing the referendum. In both cases the outcome is the same, namely to prevent the United Nations from organizing a free and democratic referendum to decide the fate of the Saharan people.

Thus, the Moroccan attitude lacks [words indistinct] the genuine and sincere intention of finding a just solution based on respect for the principle of self-determination and on the fact that the Saharan issue is acknowledged world-wide as a case of de- colonization. [passage omitted]

Our advice to Morocco is not to waste this opportunity, indeed, the opportunity of the peace process following 20 years of struggle. [passage omitted]

However, if the peace process fails, it is certain that we will resume the fighting and return to war. There is no other alternative; either respecting the will of the Saharan people to self-determination or the return to the struggle to force the respect of this right. [passage omitted]

Despite the pressures practised by the Saharan grassroots, whether military or civilian, on the Saharan leadership, the effort is still being made to implant some patience and hope in the minds of Saharans with regard to the peace plan. Naturally, a large section calls for resuming the struggle and resistance so as to recover the usurped right.

[Meddah] How does your excellency assess the role of the Arab Maghreb Union [UMA] countries vis-a-vis the Saharan issue?

[Abdelaziz] On the whole, there are countries in the Arab Maghreb whom we thank for defending the legitimate rights of one of the peoples of the Arab Maghreb and a country of the Arab Maghreb. It is natural that Algeria and its people come on top of the list of these countries. Thanks to both, and to other countries.

Since the 1991 peace plan, we can say that all the Arab Maghreb countries, apart from the Kingdom of Morocco, have adopted this plan and dealt with us on the basis of this plan.

[Meddah] May I ask you a question about international solidarity with the Saharan issue?

[Abdelaziz] The Saharan issue is very clear. Since the sixties, the Saharan problem has been treated at the level of the United Nations. It was also treated at the levels of the OAU and the International Court of Justice in the Hague in 1975. The consultative view of the the International Court of Justice in the Hague is known. The court stressed that there had been relations of sovereignty neither between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Western Sahara nor between the Mauritanian group [as heard] and the Western Sahara.

All these organizations have always been unanimous on [stressing] the necessity of respecting the Saharan people's right to self-determination. The other factor is that the Saharan people has given the proof on many occasions, with peaceful means and also through armed struggle and all other ways of struggle, of its determination to recover its rights to freedom, independence, and self-determination.

The wide-ranging international understanding of the Western Saharan issue is based on these premises. We can say that there is at present a world consensus on the following facts: The Western Saharan issue is an issue of decolonization; the Saharan people has got the right to self-determination, to the need to hold a free, democratic, and transparent referendum for the self-determination of the Saharan people; and on top of all this, the Saharan Republic is recognized by the OAU as a sovereign state enjoying all its rights within the organization; the Polisario is also recognized worldwide, by all the countries of the world, as the sole legitimate representative of the Saharan people. The final solution, the recovery by the Saharan people of the totality of its national rights and its sovereignty over its land are a matter of time, no more.

[Ziouadj] How do you explain Morocco's refusal to allow the international press to visit the Saharan areas and especially after the presence of the United Nations, the fact that the presence of journalists side by side with the international organization is one of the rights of international public opinion so as to know what is going on in this occupied territory, and what are the endeavors to enable the journalists to visit those areas?

[Abdelaziz] Very simple. The policy pursued by Morocco in dealing with the peace process is falsification, oppression, and monitoring everything inluding the United Nations and its activities. This is on the one hand. On the other, it is known that the strength and weight of the United Nations is derived from international public opinion. Consequently it is an ally to the United Nations. In other words in order for the United

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Nations to impose its plans and the respect for its resolutions, it needs the international press, international public opinion, the parliamentarians, the lawyers and public opinion in general. However, Morocco intends to falsify, so it wants to exclude international public opinion. It wants to keep the United Nations weak, therefore it intends to deprive it of its main source of strength, namely the international public opinion.

Morocco intends to isolate the United Nations into a mere group of officers unaccompanied by journalists or TV or news agencies or parliamentarians or public opinion, and consequently remaining a group of persons without actual weight or value because Morocco does not want to follow a just, democratic, and transparent operation.

[Meddah] Mr. President, still in the same context, among the proposals presented by the European Parliament [EP] was sending a mission to consolidate the presence of the international observers in the region during the self-determination referendum. Are there any clarifications on this point? What does such an initiative represent vis-a-vis the Saharan issue?

[Abdelaziz] Yes, we were at the EP headquarters in Strasbourg last week. We met with the EP president, most of its committees' heads, various political formations inside the EP, as well as many parliamentarians. On the whole, we found understanding with the EP and the visit was crowned with the issuing of a resolution which we consider an important one under the current circumstances. It reflected Europe's concern over what is happening and its interest in the need to implement the peace plan in the best possible way. Among the initiatives the EP had called for in its recommendation was sending a mission to the region to be acquainted with the reality there. Undoubtedly, a mission or missions like these would put pressure on the parties concerned to be committed to the peace plan and on the United Nations and its officials to run the process in the best possible way. However, most importantly such a mission draws the interest of world public opinion to this issue and revives it internationally. Therefore, we consider that such initiatives, under the current circumstance, are very important and constitute the main support for the peace plan.

[Ziouadj] The peace plan has stipulated direct contacts between the two parties to the conflict, Morocco and the POLISARIO Front, or the Saharan Democratic Arab Republic [SDAR]. Let us suppose that a meeting of this kind is taking place at this moment, what would be the proposals of the SDAR be for a quick implementation of the peace plan?

[Abdelaziz] Naturally, disputes like the Saharan dispute have always been resolved by direct negotiations between the two warring parties. [passage omitted]

I think, however, that the Moroccan Government should be realistic and start a direct, official, and sincere dialogue with us under the aegis of the United Nations. Today all the necessary conditions are there: the existence of a favorable international climate and basis for an agreement, which has at least been endorsed by the two parties and by the international community, i.e. the holding of a free and fair referendum to allow the Saharan people to exercise self-determination. [passage omitted]

However, once such a meeting takes place, we will have a number of topics which can be discussed with our Moroccan neighbors. First, we should through such negotiations create suitable psychological climate to hold the referendum. Also, we can through those negotiations examine the problem of voting eligibility and we might be able to reach an agreement. We can also examine our future relations, regardless of the outcome of the referendum, and we might be able to reach an agreement.

Nonetheless, I have always thought that negotiations can only be constructive and that the political sincerity of any party can only be measured by his willingness to accept or to reject negotiations.

[Lounakel] Your excellency, do not you think that betting on and adhering to the international peace process in such circumstances and for ever, will in the end serve the policy of the Moroccan Kingdom particularly because the latter continues the transfer of Moroccan nationals to the Saharan territory and impedes the UN efforts, thereby increasing its financial burdens, and it also reinforces its defenses and armed forces in the region, making it more difficult in the future, if matters remain as they are, to resort to the armed struggle again.

[Abdelaziz] I want to register that the UN involvement in Western Sahara was not a Moroccan option. [passage omitted]

Our strength comes from the strength of our right and the right of Morocco comes from the strength of their power. With time the strength of right will increase and the right of power will decrease. [passage omitted]

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Perry's Remarks Leave Causes for 'Crisis' in Gulf

MM2703152195 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 26 Mar 95 p 9

[Article by 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Rashid: "Iran, the United States, and the Gulf"]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry came to the Gulf region, made serious verbal statements, and left. Even though he has left, his statements have caused a controversy in a region that cannot afford political jokes.

Although "what has been said has been said, be it true or false," it does leave behind causes for a crisis which might have repercussions at a time when some of the region's governments are trying to spend the rest of the decade in peace.

Perry accused Iran of stockpiling arms in the Strait of Hormuz and of stockpiling large quantities of chemical weapons on the United Arab Emirates [UAE] islands in the Gulf. In other words, Iran is preparing for a new war.

That serious charge in fact requires some supporting evidence to be divulged to the public, but in the absence of tangible confirmation, the U.S. secretary's statement becomes provocative and distasteful even to his friends. Its danger lies in the fact that it undermines the value of U.S. official political views in the region and strengthens the position of those who claim that the United States is the party which fabricates these crises as a justification for its continued intensive presence and as a plausible reason for selling arms.

I do not believe that a state of the size and importance of the United States would risk a region vital to it and drive it toward conflict and infighting for limited political or commercial reasons. And yet, the U.S. Defense Secretary's statements provoked everyone, friend and foe.

Actually, the statements of Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the Saudi second deputy prime minister and minister of defense, in which he denied what has been said about Iranian provocations, were reassuring to all, in that there is interest in peaceful and fraternal relations and that Saudi Arabia believes that a neighbor is innocent until proven guilty.

It is a political axiom that quarrels usually occur with neighbors, and that is why it is necessary to lay clear and permanent foundations for relations.

The Americans had said that Iraq was "theoretically" a threat to its Gulf neighbors despite its expression of goodwill toward them. It took an occupation of Kuwait to convince us all. Regrettably, the American feeling was correct.

Now the Americans are talking about Iranian intentions toward their Arab Gulf neighbors. It is difficult to ridicule that, but the golden rule remains that intentions are tested on the ground of reality.

The story of the chemical weapons appears to be one of the American folklore tales in the region but it is not unlikely. Iran's purchases of strategic offensive weapons such as submarines are real. They have been delivered to Iran which at the time paid for them with funds borrowed from foreign banks. Its desire to build a nuclear reactor has been confirmed, albeit on the grounds of the need for peaceful energy.

Despite all these proofs and suspicions regarding Iran, it still has a historic opportunity to rectify its affairs with its neighbors directly. Iran can offer more, politically, than it has already done to confirm its goodwill towards its neighbors. That way it would block the way for the American arms dealers and foreign ambitions.

Bahrain

Amir Comments on Riot, Relations With Saudi Arabia

LD2503171795 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1505 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 25 Mar (SPA)—His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, amir of the State of Bahrain, has insisted on good relations and strong bonds between his country and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

His highness added in a press statement published here today "relations between the Kingdom and Bahrain are a model which should be copied. Inter-Gulf and inter-Arab relations should be modeled on the same clarity, reciprocal trust, and cooperation that exists between the two countries."

His highness pointed out the appreciation of the rest of the Gulf Cooperation Council, GCC, member states for the Kingdom given its pivotal role in bringing about closer relations, trust, and good cooperation between the Gulf family of states.

Shaykh Al Khalifah insisted, however, that the GCC member-states should resist the rancorous campaigns against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia because of its economic, political and geographical importance.

Concerning the efforts of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, to resolve the dispute between the state of Bahrain and the state of Qatar, his highness said: "The custodian of the two holy mosques has tirelessly continued his contacts and efforts for the sake of the interests of all Gulf countries; he is very eager to see all GCC countries benefiting from development. Also, the Kingdom has always been a pillar for a continued Gulf strength."

He added: "We have warmly welcomed the noble good-offices of the custodian of the two holy mosques to resolve the dispute between Bahrain and Qatar. And we

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are hoping that our dispute would be resolved by a mutual understanding between us and our brothers in Qatar."

Concerning the recent regretable events in Bahrain, His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah insisted that it was only a confined riot. In dealing with it, the government chose, however, compassion rather than violence." However, he nonetheless insisted that it was the foreign media which had taken the matter out of all proportions.

Prime Minister on Recent Unrest, Other Issues

JN2603083695 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0605 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 26 Mar (WAKH)—Bahraini Prime Minister His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah has stated that the spirit of love that dominates Bahraini society does not allow any actions outside this spirit. He said that the aim of the state is to raise the standard of living in this society and to look forward to a bright future replete with prospects for building the present and future of Bahrain and making this country a land of peace and prosperity.

In a statement to the Saudi newspapers AL-RIYAD and SAUDI GAZETTE published today, his highness noted that conditions in Bahrain are normal and that those who carried out riots and sabotage activities were rejected from the beginning, that their isolation and withdrawal are increasing, that they are now rejected by the society, which is based on a feeling of a united family, and that the foolish acts of sabotage are linked to organizations that are supported abroad and whose sabotage links have recently been made public.

His highness pointed out that, thanks to national unity and the cohesion of the Bahraini people and their feeling of affiliation to this peaceful country, this sabotage group was forced to retreat and withdraw into isolation. His highness said the sabotage activities had no cause whatsoever and that such things could happen in any state, big or small, because there are bound to be shortcomings. However, nobody can condone the destruction of his country and nobody participates in the smashing of his own private and public establishments, he added. His highness reiterated that the incidents were backed from outside and that they were premeditated. The incidents have been defeated and firmly confronted to prevent them from violating the unique nature and the tranquility of the Bahraini society, his highness said.

The prime minister said: Certain misled people every now and then create anarchy and disturb the peace and we are dealing with them very patiently because we are certain that such acts will definitely fail, thanks to the unity of the people and their opposition to this renegade group. His highness asserted that the cohesive Bahraini society is the best proof against violators and that the best guarantor is our people, who are exercising their rights in freedom with complete harmony among the sectors of society.

His highness expressed displeasure with the unjust and tendentious propaganda abroad, which tends to magnify these incidents and said that this propaganda sometimes comes from certain brothers and friends. He said the media did not deal with the events objectively or sincerely but sought exaggeration and sensationalism and deviated from their sacred duties. His highness asked the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states to be aware of this and said: What afflicts us today could afflict any other state in one form or another and even if I have support abroad it will be limited. [sentence as received] Therefore, as GCC states, we must take a unified stand against these campaigns and report on events that take place in our lives and societies within a framework of cooperation in order to help undermine these unjust campaigns that aim to disturb the peace and stability of the region, given that this security is the concern of all of us. He said: We all work to maintain this security, which is an integrated whole, because any aggression against one of the GCC states is an aggression against all of them.

The Bahraini prime minister stated that the GCC states must establish frameworks of cooperation among themselves in order to promote the process of development in various domains. His highness said: Our current circumstances must prompt us to overcome barriers and have a unified viewpoint. Our cooperation must be integrated because any problem in any of our countries will affect the other countries.

Regarding Gulf economic cooperation, the prime minister said: We must still exert strenuous efforts to realize economic integration through expanding the market and benefiting from our common experiences. He added: Bahrain can play a role given its economic and banking experience and qualified manpower that could be utilized by the region's states. This expertise should be invested and used. The other Gulf states should seek to establish cooperation with Bahrain. He said the Gulf states need to make a qualitative leap forward in collective work through achieving cohesion and integration. He noted: We are living in an era of economic groupings based on balanced interests.

In this respect, his highness recalled Bahrain's efforts to boost its status as a permanent center for trade, services, expos, and conferences. He said this role gains added importance in light of the facilities the state provides in order to woo foreign investments and create an economic atmosphere that is free and open to the world. His highness called on the GCC states to benefit from this situation. He stressed Bahrain's encouragement of any action that would accelerate the GCC's drive toward benefiting from these facilities [word indistinct], adding that this drive should be based on a collective will that would enable us to take large strides in the implementation of a practical program that would keep us abreast

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with international developments. He pointed out that these developments behoove us to draw out our future goals in light of the numerous transformations in various fields.

His Highness Shaykh Khalifah called for the employment of all that may contribute to the interest of peoples and states and help them enter the next century confident and reassured.

Regarding the Saudi mediation aiming to put an end to the Bahraini-Qatari standoff, his highness said: We and the State of Qatar are brothers. Differences always occur. The important thing is that we should settle this dispute. The final statement of the GCC Ministerial Council's recent meeting marked a good beginning to reach a fraternal resolution that would preserve the fraternal relations linking the two countries through the good offices of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques and king of Saudi Arabia. We are proud of this initiative, which comes within the framework of the great role played by the custodian of the two holy mosques in promoting the council's march.

His highness praised the historic relations between Bahrain and the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He said this relationship, which has deep-seated historical roots, derives its strength and progress from the reciprocal friendliness and fraternal feelings between the two sisterly leaderships and peoples. He described these relations as an extension of the efforts of our forefathers. He said: We in Bahrain are proud of our fraternal relations with Saudi Arabia, which have opened wide horizons for realizing our two countries' ambitions and aspirations. We in Bahrain are proud of the stands adopted by the custodian of the two holy mosques regarding any effort aimed at boosting the cohesion between our sisterly countries.

Opposition: Police Kill Student in Campus Protest

NC2603193895 Paris AFP in English 1900 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, March 26 (AFP)—A Bahraini schoolboy died Sunday [26 March] after being shot by security forces who broke up a meeting at a college in al-Diraz, northwest of the Bahraini capital Manama, opposition groups and residents said.

'Abd-al-Hamid 'Abdallah 'Ashari, 17, was struck in the head by a bullet when security forces dispersed the school pupils Saturday, residents of al-Diraz told AFP by telephone. He died in Bahrain international hospital.

There was no official confirmation of the report.

Two Bahraini opposition groups in exile—the Bahrain Freedom Movement and the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain—said "violent demonstrations" erupted in several areas with large Shiite Moslem populations after an education ministry official, 'Abd-al-Wahhab Husayn, was arrested on March 17.

Husayn, 42, from al-Nuwaydirat, southeast of Manama, was among a group of activists who drafted a petition in 1992 calling for the return of parliament, which has remained suspended in the Gulf state since 1975, the sources said.

He was in a committee which included the Shiite cleric Shaykh 'Ali Salman, whose arrest on December 5 sparked the most violent riots in Bahrain since its independence in 1971.

The shaykh was expelled to the United Arab Emirates in mid- January and he later requested political asylum in Britain.

Husayn called on the prime minister, Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, to talk to the opposition to resolve the political crisis on March 17.

Residents said several people were arrested in al-Nuwaydirat after Husayn's appeal.

On Friday the Interior Ministry disclosed that a policeman, Ibrahim Rashid Sa'idi, was stabbed and beaten to death on Wednesday in al-Nuwaydirat.

The attack took place on the day 12 people went on trial accused of "sabotage" and of inciting the December unrest.

Kuwait

Reportage on Strike by Oil Workers, Negotiations

Strike Suspended

LD2403194895 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1840 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 24 Mar, KUNA—Muhammad al-Sarhan, the chairman of the trade union of the Kuwait Oil Company [KOC] said today that the strike by the staff of two oil departments, which will be a week old as of 0700 tomorrow morning, had been suspended.

In a statement to KUNA he said: "The strike has been suspended...and technical matters will be discussed and viewpoints will be brought closer at talks, which will be held tomorrow with the management of the KOC under the patronage of the oil minister."

The workers of the marine and production departments of the KOC started a strike last Saturday. [passage omitted]

Union Head: Strike Suspended, Not Over

LD2503104995 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0930 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait, 25 Mar (KUNA)—Muhammad al- Sarhan, chairman of the trade union of Kuwait Oil Company [KOC], has praised the outcome of a meeting held this morning between the trade union and

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the company's management under the chairmanship of Oil Minister 'Abd-al-Muhsin Mid'aj, describing it as "positive."

Al-Sarhan told KUNA that al-Mid'aj has promised to solve all workers' pending problems and that he has issued his directives to KOC management to start negotiations and end the issue.

In a statement following the meeting, the oil minister says that the strike has been been called off completely and that the company's workers have returned to work. However, al-Sarhan told KUNA that the strike has been suspended pending the results of the coming negotiations with the company's management.

Al-Sarhan expects the meetings between the two sides to be held soon—during the next two days.

He said: "The meetings will tackle the main aspects of dispute between the trade union and the company, particularly that present workers should no longer be required to have university qualifications in order to be considered for promotion, and the implementation of the organizational structure to be within two years instead of three." The union head added that the union also demands a reduced period for assessing managers from six months to three months, as well as other issues related to technical and administrative aspects.

Al-Sarhan affirmed that the oil minister has been told of the trade union demands and has agreed to them in principle.

Workers at the Kuwait Oil Company began their strike last Saturday, and decided yesterday "to suspend" the action as from this morning and to return to work.

It is worth mentioning that the company used a group of workers from its maintenance department to run the production operation during the one-week long strike.

Kuwait produces some 2 million barrels of oil a day, which represents about 3 percent of the world oil production.

Company officials said that production operations were not affected by the strike, and that the company managed to contain the crisis with an established contingency plan.

Oil Company Welcomes End of Strike

LD2503180995 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1516 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 25 Mar (KUNA)—The Kuwait Oil Company [KOC] expressed happiness for the response of the KOC employees' union, "the cancellation of the strike this morning," and its return to negotiatations with the company's management.

A responsible source at the company told KUNA that the company "expresses its permanent concern for the interest of its employees, and it exerted, and will exert, all efforts to resolve the dispute between it and the union, and for reaching a solution that satisfies the two sides without infringing on the company's regulations and policies." [passage omitted]

A responsible source added that during the meeting between the oil minister and the union, the minister pointed out that he was "always with the employees' just demands that do not infringe on the laws and regulations in force." [passage omitted]

The meetings between the two sides are expected to be held during the next two days. [passage omitted]

Correction to Source Denies U.S. Requested Faylakah Base

MM2303184595

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "Source Denies U.S. Requested Faylakah Island as Base," published in the 23 March Near East & South Asia DAILY REPORT, pages 26-27:

Page 26, column two, paragraph three, sentence one, make read ...United States requested that Faylakah Island be turned into... (supplying dropped words)

Qatar

Amir Addresses Council on GCC, NPT, Bosnia

JN2703115095 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0950 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Doha, 27 Mar (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani, amir of the State of Qatar, has said that his country is highly interested in supporting the Gulf Cooperation Council's [GCC] march and realizing stability in the Gulf region.

In an inaugural speech at the 23d ordinary session of the Qatari Consultative Council, his highness said that his country has always been eager to contribute effectively to Gulf issues and those of the Arab and Islamic nation and to call for the unity and integration of their peoples in order to assume a proper position in light of the economic and political blocs dominating the world.

The amir of the State of Qatar welcomed the efforts being exerted through the Arab League to cleanse the Arab atmosphere, realize reconciliation, and restore Arab solidarity along realistic bases marked with frankness and objectivity. He expressed the hope that the efforts being exerted in this direction will realize the aspired results, restore the Arab nation's solidarity and unity of stands, and accomplish common Arab interests.

He stressed the need for Israel's commitment, and not just the Arab states', to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT] and for making the Middle East region free of weapons of mass destruction. He said it is illogical to allow a certain state to possess nuclear weapons and prevent its neighbors from doing the same.

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He voiced his regret at the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the continuous brutal Serb aggression and obstruction of all international efforts aimed at reaching a peaceful settlement to the conflict. He stressed the need for taking deterrent measures to halt this sinful aggression and create a proper atmosphere for reaching a just and peaceful solution that would preserve the unity, independence, and territorial integrity of the Republic of Bosnia- Herzegovina.

Saudi Arabia

CDLR Issues Invitation for Buraydah Vigil

MS2703102095 London CDLR MONITOR in English 25 Mar 95

["Invitation" from the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights of Saudi Arabia (CDLR); issued on 25 March—received by fax 27 March]

[FBIS Transcribed Text]

Buraydah Vigil

Invitation to Witness

The CDLR has called for a vigil in Buraydah after Friday prayers on 30th of March 1995 in the Thiab Grand Mosque in the city center.

The presence of diplomats, media and expatriates at the successful Riyadh vigil on the 16th of March 1995 was one of the major reasons of it's success and the unusual restraint shown by the authorities. Your presence in "isolated" Buraydah during the coming vigil will be a source of great moral support and a deterrent against any harsh or irresponsible actions.

You will be a witness to an historic event in person. It is our hope that you will not forgo the chance to document the event audiovisually. Please attend!! London, 25 March 1995

UK Trade Envoy Meets Commerce Minister

LD2603123095 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1115 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 26 March— The minister of commerce Dr. Suleyman al-Salim at his office this morning met with the President of the British board of trade Mr. Michael Heseltine and the delegation which is accompanying him. During the meeting aspects of bilateral cooperation and ways of bolstering it were discussed. In this connection, the importance of the extent of holding trade fairs and exchanging visits between businessmen in the two countries in order to learn about the business opportunities in the two countries were raised..

Dr. Suleyman al-Salim explained to the British side how important for Saudi Arabia to benefit from the preferential treatment system in operation in the EU also the importance of initiating joint projects in the Kingdom had been stressed.

The meeting was attended on the Saudi side by the Ministry of Commerce Undersecretary Dr. 'Abd al-Raman al-Zamil and the director general of foreign trade Ahmad Hamza 'Umayr. The British ambassador to the Kingdom also attended the meeting.

United Arab Emirates

AL-BAYAN Urges Gore To Pressure Israel, Not Arabs

JN2303131295 Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic 18 Mar 95 p 1

[Editorial: "Gore After Christopher"]

[FBIS Translated Text] We hope that U.S. Vice President Al Gore's tour of the region, which will begin tomorrow, will be more successful than U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit and that its success will not be confined to achieving more joint cooperation between Egypt and the United States in terms of development and aid. We hope he will make a breakthrough on the three frozen tracks in the peace process; namely, the Syrian, the Palestinian, and nuclear tracks.

We hope that Gore will not make the same mistake Christopher did, which the United States is still making and which creates an inability to advance the settlement of the situation in the Middle East. The role of exerting further pressure on the Arab parties has not produced any results in the past and will not achieve anything for the one playing such a role.

We also hope that the decisionmakers in Washington are now aware of the cause of this—simply that the Arabs have nothing else to concede. The Arabs offered sacrifices and made concessions, which are not accepted by the overwhelming majority of the Arab people, for the sake of peace and rendering the peace process a success. Any further pressure here will only undermine the existing cordial relations between the Arabs and the Americans. If these relations are based on mutual benefits it is certain that these relations can only continue in an atmosphere of cordiality, confidence, and understanding. The Arabs should not continue to feel that the United States is biased toward Israel in issues related to their legitimate rights, sovereignty, and security.

Al Gore, in particular, enjoys a good reputation as a balanced politician, and we pin our hopes on this balance. Perhaps he is aware that his mission to achieve peace will become simple and possible if he directs his pressure toward the Israelis, relying, in this, on international legitimacy, Security Council resolutions, and the UN Charter, as well as on the responsibility of the

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United States in its capacity as the unilateral leader of the new world. All this is in line with its real interests, which can only be maintained and developed if the situation in the Middle East is stable and ensures the flow of fuel supplies and provides the appropriate atmosphere for trade and investments.

Pakistani Minister on Cooperation, Defense Sales

BK2303101795 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates [UAE] are forming a coordination group for defense cooperation. Pakistan has already established such groups with the United States and Turkey.

Pakistani Defense Minister Aftab Shaban Mirani told a news conference in Abu Dhabi that Pakistan and the UAE are also holding talks on bilateral defense cooperation. He disclosed that Pakistan has sold defense equipment to several countries after the defense weapons show in the United Arab Emirates. Pakistan is currently exporting defense equipment to over 40 countries. Aftab Shaban Mirani said Pakistan has adopted a liberal economic policy to encourage private sector participation in production of defense materiel.

Army Chief: Defense Network To Serve GCC States

JN2303121795 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0800 GMT 23 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait, 23 Mar (WAKH)—Staff Lieutenant General Pilot Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan, chief of staff of the Armed Forces in the United Arab Emirates [UAE], has said that a unified defense network will be created to link the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states.

In a statement to the Kuwaiti newspaper AL-QABAS, Shaykh Muhammad said there is no unified operation room, however, he added, once the Hughes Company completes its study at the end of this summer, a network linking the GCC's six states will be established.

He said that there is coordination among the GCC's six countries in purchasing weapons, while noting that each state has full freedom to choose the weapons it wishes to purchase in accordance with its capabilities and strategy.

He added that his country is purchasing weapons in order to protect its sovereignty. He stressed that the UAE adopts a defensive armament policy. He said: What we buy meets minimal military requirements.

Yemen

Chief of Staff, Delegation Return From Saudi Arabia

JN2403175395 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Brother Staff Brigadier General 'Abdallah 'Ali 'Ulaywah, chief of the general staff of the Yemeni Armed Forces, and members of the Yemeni side in the Yemeni-Saudi joint military committee returned to Sanaa today after the committee concluded its first round of talks, which yielded good results. [passage omitted]

Parliamentary Delegation Leaves For Madrid

JN2403181095 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Brother 'Ali Salih 'Ubad, member of the Yemeni House of Representatives speakership, left Sanaa for Madrid today leading a parliamentary delegation that will take part in the meetings of the 93d conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which will be held in Madrid between 27 March and 1 April 1995. [passage omitted]

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Detained U.S. 'Experts' Intended 'Sabotage'

NC2703115095 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1135 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih has stated that the two Americans detained in Iraq were preparing sabotage operations. He added that they entered Iraq deliberately, since they are military experts.

He asked why they crossed the Iraqi border when they knew that Kuwait had dug a trench separating it from Iraq.

'Aziz Rejects U.S. Amendment to UN Resolutions

JN2603120495 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1135 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, United Nations, 26 Mar (INA)—The INA correspondent in New York says that the U.S. Administration has prepared a draft resolution to amend Resolutions 706 and 712, claiming that by this amendment, the quantity of oil that Iraq will be allowed to export will be upped from $1.6 billion every six months to $1 billion every three months.

Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz made the following comment on this new U.S. draft resolution:

The new U.S. draft resolution is only a maneuver to deceive the world and prolong the embargo.

'Aziz said: The first lie in this new-old U.S. draft resolution is that it appears to increase the amount of money from $1.6 billion every six months to $1 billion every three months. In fact the new amount will eventually be less than the previous amount because $300 million of that will go to the compensation fund, $200 million to the UN agencies, and another unspecified amount, which may be more than $100 million, will go to cover the expenses of the Special Commission. This means that Iraq will actually be left with $7 for each Iraqi citizen to provide food and medicine, which is less than one-quarter of the value of the food provided by the ration card furnished by the state now.

'Aziz added: This is from the point of view of the real value of the amount, but as for other aspects this new draft resolution includes many illogical and interventionist conditions in Iraq's sovereignty, the most dangerous of which is changing the situation in the Autonomous Region in northern Iraq into a state of permanent separation. Furthermore, this draft is an exposed attempt to delay the lifting of the siege for a long time after all the basic elements for fully lifting it have become available through the implementation of Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687.

The deputy prime minister said that it is absurd to imagine that this draft will end or alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people, and stressed that the only way to end this suffering is the full and unconditional implementation of Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687.

'Aziz added: We hope that the Security Council member states that called for lifting the siege and implementing Paragraph 22 will expose and resist this draft.

The INA correspondent in New York has learned from diplomats close to French sources that France has a draft resolution on the implementation of Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687, and that the ambassadors of the five permanent member states met two days ago for consultation on the new U.S. draft resolution to amend Resolutions 706 and 712.

It was reported that the French and Chinese ambassadors believe the U.S. draft resolution is an indication of bad faith and is aimed at maintaining the sanctions against Iraq for another period regardless of any positive points in Ekeus' forthcoming report.

Minister Assails U.S. Plans To Keep Sanctions

JN2603135395 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1312 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 26 Mar (INA)—Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id a-Sahhaf has asserted that the most serious threat to the region comes from the United States, and urged the region's countries to solve their problems and to confront that threat.

In an interview with the Cairo newspaper AL-WAFD published here today, he said the United States is now besieged politically because of its interpretation of the Security Council resolutions. U.S. officials, he added, are touring the world in a bid to maintain the abnormal situation it has crated and to keep the oil areas as its protectorate and entrench its presence in them.

He clarified that the United States is trying to tighten its grip on the region under false pretexts in order to frighten its countries and plunder its wealth. He stressed that there is a growing Arab awareness of U.S. goals and that the Arabs would never accept this hegemony.

The foreign minister then referred to U.S. attempts to spread a series of lies to serve its political goals pertaining to Iraq's commitment to a provision on biological weapons. He said the Americans, as well as Ekeus, know Iraq has no military program in this field and that many technicians know that such allegations are baseless.

On the Turkish military operation in northern Iraq, Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf said: We were surprised by the Turkish invasion which we condemn and denounce because it violates Iraq's sovereignty. He called on the Turkish Government to immediately withdraw its forces as the operation is not in line with the desire Turkish officials express about the need for Iraq and Turkey to have relations based on good neighborliness and economic cooperation.

Al-Sahhaf rebutted the U.S. Administration's claims that it protects the Kurds, saying this administration views the Kurds in Turkey as terrorists while it defends the gangs of sabotage in northern Iraq and views them as angels.

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The foreign minister said Iraq returned all Kuwaiti and non- Kuwaiti prisoners in 1991 and the search is now for missing persons and not prisoners. He said Iraq is cooperating with the International Committee of the Red Cross in looking for them.

On the stand within the UN Security Council on the embargo imposed on Iraq, al-Sahhaf said there has been a manifest change in stands in favor of lifting the embargo. But, the U.S. Administration tries to obstruct all the UN Security Council resolutions, even those resolutions it had imposed on the council.

Al-Sahhaf concluded by calling on the Arabs to forget present problems and focus on the future.

UN's Rolf Ekeus, Biological Weapons Team Arrive

JN2403165595 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1628 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 24 Mar (INA)—Rolf Ekeus, head of the UN Special Commission entrusted with removing weapons of mass destruction in Iraq in implementation of Resolution 687, arrived in Baghdad at noon today.

In response to a question by an INA correspondent, Rolf Ekeus said that he does not agree with some U.S. officials' recent statements that Iraq has rebuilt its installations for producing chemical weapons, the nuclear program, and long-range missiles.

He said he arrived in Iraq as part of an eight-man team specialized in biological weapons to resolve problems related to such weapons. He said that after completing his mission, he will submit his semiannual report to the UN Security Council on 10 April.

Ekeus stressed that his mission in Baghdad has nothing to do with the two detained Americans who infiltrated from Kuwait to Umm Qasr 10 days ago.

Meanwhile, the first session of talks between Iraqi and the Special Commission's Ekeus-led delegation was held in Baghdad this evening. Ekeus' stay in Baghdad is expected to last two days.

Tariq 'Aziz Meets Ekeus

JN2603190595 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1832 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 26 Mar (INA)—Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz met here today with Rolf Ekeus, head of the UN Special Commission, and the delegation accompanying him.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf; Lieutenant General 'Amir Muhammad Rashid, director of the Military Industrialization Organization; and Foreign Ministry Under Secretary Riyad al-Qaysi.

Second Round of Talks 'Practical'

JN2503194395 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1908 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The second round of technical talks between Iraq and the UN Special Commission was held this morning at the Military Industrialization Organization headquarters.

The Iraqi side to the talks was led by Lieutenant General Eng. 'Amir Muhammad Rashid, director of the Military Industrialization Organization, while the UN Special Commissions' side was led by Commission Chairman Rolf Ekeus. The talks were attended by Foreign Ministry Under Secretary Dr. Riyad al-Qaysi and a number of specialists.

In a statement to the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY, Rolf Ekeus said his talks with the Iraqi officials were technical and practical. He said the two sides are working together to arrive at an agreement on the outstanding problems.

Third Round Concludes

JN2503191995 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1905 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 25 Mar (INA)—The third round of technical talks between Iraq and the UN Special Commission concluded this evening.

The Iraqi side to the talks was led by Lieutenant General Engineer 'Amir Muhammad Rashid, director of the Military Industrialization Organization; while the UN Special Commission was led by commission Chairman Rolf Ekeus. The talks were attended by Foreign Ministry Under Secretary Dr. Riyad al-Qaysi and a number of specialist from both sides.

The second round of technical talks between Iraq and the UN Special Commission was held at the Military Industrialization Organization headquarters this morning.

Ekeus Cites Progess

JN2703114195 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1052 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 27 Mar (INA)—Technical talks between Iraq and the UN Special Commission, which were held over a period of four days, concluded today.

In statements to INA, UN Special Commission Chairman Rolf Ekeus said his talks with Iraqi official were very good. He said: The Iraqi side was very cooperative and the two sides exerted persistent efforts to overcome the difficulties we faced in the past.

He added: Iraq has furnished us with very useful information in the field of biological weapons. We made some progress in that regard and we are now studying this information.

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Ekeus stressed to INA that he will present his semi-annual report to the UN Security Council on the commission's work on 10 April, as scheduled. He noted that the commission has completed the major part of its mission in Iraq.

The final round of talks was held at the Military Industrialization Organization headquarters. It was headed by Lieutenant General 'Amir Muhammad Rashid, director of the Military Industrialization Organization, for Iraq; and by Rolf Ekeus for the UN Special Commission.

Ekeus Terms Talks 'Constructive'

JN2603185295 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1827 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 26 Mar (INA)—A round of talks was held here today between Lieutenant General Engineer 'Amir Muhammad Rashid, director of the Military Industrialization Organization; and Rolf Ekeus, head of the UN Special Commission.

The talks were also attended by Foreign Ministry Under Secretary Riyad al-Qaysi and several experts and specialists from both sides.

In a statement to the Iraqi News Agency, Rolf Ekeus described these talks and the previous ones as constructive.

Minister Says 'No Biological Weapons'

NC2603183695 Paris AFP in English 1813 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, March 26 (AFP)—Iraq said Sunday [26 March] it had no biological weapons or plans to develop them, as UN disarmament chief Rolf Ekeus wound up a mission to Baghdad aimed at obtaining extra data on such programmes.

"We have no biological weapons. Ekeus and the Americans know Iraq has no military programme in that field," Iraqi Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf told the Egyptian opposition daily AL-WAFD.

Asked about large stocks of vaccines which Iraq could have used for manufacturing biological weapons, al-Sahhaf said Baghdad "bought 30 tonnes of monocellular protein in 1988 which was used for animals and in hospitals."

He said Iraq still had 15 tonnes left, "but the expiry date was in 1993 and they can no longer be used.

"We have not bought other vaccines, despite our needs."

Ekeus, head of the UN special commission on disarming Iraq (UNSCOM), said on arrival in Baghdad Friday that his mission was aimed at filling the gaps in information on Iraq's germ warfare programme.

The issue could determine whether the United Nations embargo imposed on Iraq when it invaded Kuwait in August 1990 will be eased.

Under the UN Security Council's Gulf War ceasefire Resolution 687, Baghdad must eliminate its weapons of mass destruction and submit to long-term monitoring before the oil embargo is lifted.

Ekeus said after a visit to Baghdad last month that the Iraqis had failed to give a convincing explanation for the disappearance of between 20 and 30 tonnes of culture for growing bacteria, imported before 1990.

Sahaf said the United States was "trying to exploit this issue and fabricate lies to serve its political objectives, but the special commission knows they are not true."

He said the Ekeus visit was aimed at "unmasking these lies."

Sahaf also described as "false" photographs shown recently by U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright of sites she said could be used to produce chemical weapons.

"They are water treatment plants," he said.

Ekeus—Germ Warfare Issue Unresolved

NC2703112095 Paris AFP in English 1049 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, March 27 (AFP)—UN disarmament chief Rolf Ekeus announced here Monday [27 March] that he had failed to fill the gaps on Iraq's germs warfare programme at the end of a four-day mission.

He told reporters that the issue, crucial for Iraq's hopes for an easing of UN sanctions in force since August 1990, was still unresolved.

"I don't think we have concluded the issue of biological warfare as yet," said Ekeus. "Iraq may be clean but we don't know that. We haven't been completely assured."

U.S. 'Allegations' Refuted

JN2603085395 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0750 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 26 Mar (INA)—AL-THAWRAH emphasizes that Washington's failure to substantiate any of its accusation against Iraq led it to fabricate lies in order to convince the international community of prolonging the siege.

In an article published today, AL-THAWRAH, organ of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, expressed confidence that the allegations of the U.S. intelligence establishment that Iraq has restored its capabilities to produce weapons of mass destruction was a new but dead lie aimed to cause confusion in international circles in order to deflect the Security Council from its objective, legal, and legitimate course on the basis of which it was established.

It says these lies were quickly exposed, adding that they were refuted, not by Iraq or any official Iraqi side, but by

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Yevgeniy Primakov, chairman of the Russian intelligence service; and Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the UN Special Commission in charge of removing weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Primakov stressed that the Russian intelligence organs have not monitored anything concerning Iraqi restoration of its capabilities to resume manufacturing weapons of mass destruction.

Ekeus, in his capacity as head of the team that monitors Iraqi armament establishments, supported what Primakov said, and clearly emphasized that he does not approve of what some U.S. officials said concerning Iraq's rebuilding of its facilities to manufacture chemical weapons, its nuclear program, and long-range missiles.

Turkish Incursion in North Enters Second Week

Kurds Fear Long-Term Occupation

NC2703141795 Paris AFP in English 1312 GMT 27 Mar 95

[Report by Yurtsay Mihcioglu]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Al-'Amadiyah, Iraq, March 27 (AFP)—Turkey's cross-border operation against Turkish Kurdish separatists entered its second week on Monday [27 March] as Iraqi Kurds voiced fears it could turn into a long-term occupation.

The army has cut back its military reports since Sunday, when a Turkish commander in the town of al-'Amadiyah announced the border region had been sealed off and the operation was about to enter a new phase with a deeper incursion.

Turkish President Suleyman Demirel, quoted in Ankara newspapers, hinted meanwhile that the operation could last as long as a year. There was no official comment on the reports.

Beyond the Turkish border zone, dozens of people have been killed since Friday in renewed clashes between rival Iraqi Kurds battling for control of the north since last May, Kurdish sources said Monday.

They said the latest fighting was centred on the Banjwin area on the Iranian border and around Irbil, the main town in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Following international criticism of its operation, the Turkish army on Monday restricted access for journalists crossing from Turkey into the security cordon which now covers 8,400 square kilometres (3,360 sq. miles).

An AFP correspondent was turned back at the Habur border post, unlike in previous days since the hot-pursuit operation was launched on March 20, and told to report to Diyarbakir, a drive of more than four hours.

The TURKISH DAILY NEWS said more troops and equipment were flown in to northern Iraq on Sunday to reinforce the 35,000 Turkish soldiers backed by tanks and warplanes taking part in Operation Steel.

General Hasan Kundakci, commander of the operation, said Saturday that his army had totally destroyed 25 camps of the rebel Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and killed 168 guerrillas.

But the Turkish Kurds remained defiant. "The Turkish army can never surround us completely. The terrain is too hilly, difficult, unknown for them," said a PKK official at a camp near 'Anzah, 30 kilometres (20 miles) from the border.

In the face of the offensive, the UN relief agency for refugees (UNHCR) on Sunday evacuated around 1,400 Turkish Kurds who had sought refuge in northern Iraq from the PKK's confrontation with the army in southeastern Turkey.

They were moved deeper into Iraqi Kurdistan.

But many Iraqi Kurds voiced fears the operation could turn into a long-term occupation, despite Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller's assurances to European countries that it would be limited.

Residents of the region, which is controlled by the Iraqi Kurds in defiance of Baghdad, complained that Turkish soldiers were beginning to impose strict measures like the troops of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn before the 1991 Gulf War.

"At first we thought it would be like before," a village chief in the Zakho region told AFP, referring to previous Turkish incursions. "But now, we don't know anymore."

He renewed charges that Turkish soldiers were making arbitrary arrests and cracking down in several villages, despite denials of such accusations from Ankara.

The army was obliged to step up security because of arms found in the border villages as well as other traces of PKK activity, a Turkish army officer said.

The Iraqi Kurdish party which controls the border region, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), warned on Monday that it would not accept a long-term Turkish presence.

"We won't tolerate it if Turkish troops start long-term fighting against the PKK from our territory," said KDP spokesman Sami 'Abd- al-Rahman, without specifying what action the group could take.

Iran on Monday followed the Arab League's example in calling for the withdrawal of Turkish troops and said its operation could not resolve Ankara's problem with Kurdish separatists.

Turkish Tanks Deployed in Zakho

LD2503105995 London Iraqi Broadcasting Corporation Press Release in English 1045 GMT 25 Mar 95

[Received by fax]

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[FBIS Transcribed Text] Salah ad-Din, Iraq (24 March 1995)—An IBC [Iraqi Broadcasting Corporation] correspondent in Zakkho reports that Turkish forces, tanks and armoured personnel carriers were placed Thursday [23 March] in positions throughout the centre of the town, from the tourist hotel to the Talka Barr checkpoint.

At 1300 yesterday, hundreds of Turkish-Kurdish refugees travelled in buses from their camps in the Atrush area for the town of Dohuk. They were carrying placards protesting against Turkish intervention in Iraqi territory. A local official convinced them to return to the refugee camp in Atrush in order to avoid incident.

During house to house searches, Turkish forces are asking Iraqi citizens for their identity cards. Residents of liberated Iraqi Kurdistan do not generally have any official documentation as it is issued by the Iraqi regime.

The Turkish operations are continuing, with men parachuting into Sarnsak, intensive bombardments of Matin mountain in the Barmani area.

Turkish Army Claims Rebels Trapped

NC2603124895 Paris AFP in English 1207 GMT 26 Mar 95

[Report by Yurtsay Mihcioglu]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Al-'Amadiyah, Iraq, March 26 (AFP)—Turkish forces have trapped rebel Kurds in northern Iraq and are preparing to close in, military strategists said Sunday [26 March].

The army has succeeded in sealing off an area of around 8,400 square kilometres (3,360 sq miles) since it swept into northern Iraq seven days ago, and the operation is ready to enter its second phase, they said.

A Turkish commander in al-'Amadiyah, who refused to be named, said troops had fully secured the border region and "we have to press on."

Once the army's grip tightens on fighters of the separatist Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) "there will probably be some fierce fighting, even hand-to-hand fighting, which does not frighten Turkish soldiers," the commander said.

His troops told AFP they were "ready for anything."

Al-'Amadiyah is a small town perched in hills 40 kilometres (25 miles) from the Turkey-Iraq border, and some 80 kilometres (50 miles) west of the Iraqi border town of Zakho.

The commander spoke as UN lorries and buses left Turkish-held Zakho with some 1,000 Turkish Kurds bound for refugee camps further south.

Many Turkish Kurds who arrived in Iraq last year now fear they will be taken prisoner by Turkish forces despite assurances from Ankara that civilians would not be harmed.

Turkish soldiers have penetrated 40 kilometres (25 miles) into Iraq along a front 220 kilometres (136 miles) wide after they sent 35,000 troops backed by armour and warplanes across the border last Monday.

General Hasan Kundakci, commander of the Turkish operation, said Saturday his army had totally destroyed 25 PKK camps and killed 168 guerrillas since the incursion began.

An army spokesman in Turkey said the offensive was pressing ahead "on all fronts" with air raids in the mountains and ground attacks in all areas concerned by the operation.

Ankara says 2,400 to 2,800 PKK separatists are based in northern Iraq from where they launch attacks inside Turkey.

Another officer in al-'Amadiyah requesting anonymity said Sunday that Ankara had to continue until it had totally wiped out the PKK.

He said he was disappointed with the small number of rebel Kurds killed but acknowledged problems in telling them apart from Iraqi Kurdish guerrillas which are not being targeted.

The officer charged that the PKK would give the bodies of their dead guerrillas to Iraqi Kurd families so they could be presented as civilian casualties.

Since the start of the operation Turkish commanders say their bombardments of targets identified as PKK camps have not caused any civilian casualties.

The Iraqi National Congress, a coalition of opposition groups based in northern Iraq, has so far reported the death of one Iraqi Kurd civilian and two wounded in bombing raids on (Kashan), a village near Zakho.

Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller on Saturday defended the "Operation Steel" against PKK rebels as a legitimate defence operation that would be "crowned by success."

She repeated affirmations that Turkish forces would pull out of northern Iraq upon completion of the "limited operation."

However late Saturday convoys of equipment, arms and ammunition continued to move towards the border, suggesting a long stay by the Turkish army in the region.

Twenty container trucks and a tank were seen by an AFP reporter travelling towards northern Iraq just before the Turkish border post of Habur.

A liaison centre has been set up in Zakho for Turkish soldiers to pass on news to their families.

Some 15,000 people have died since 1984 when the PKK launched their fight to set up a homeland in southeast Turkey.

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The Kurdish separatists have used northern Iraq as a base since Baghdad lost control of the region following a Kurdish uprising at the end of the 1991 Gulf War.

UN To Evacuate 2,000 Kurds

NC2603061495 Paris AFP in English 0031 GMT 26 Mar 95

[Report by Tolle Aram]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Atrush, Iraq, March 26 (AFP)—UN officials plan Sunday [26 March] to evacuate up to 2,000 Turkish Kurds from areas of northern Iraq under Turkish army control and move them to the safety of refugee camps further south.

The Kurds will be taken to camps at Atrush, 160 kilometers (95 miles) southeast of the border, which already houses some 9,000 refugees, Rupert Colville, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said.

"The logistical details are settled. We have about 50 vehicles, trucks and buses which will be escorted by UN blue guards," he said in Geneva.

UN officials here said 13,000 Kurds from strife-torn southeastern Turkey crossed the mountains to Iraq in the last year, with around 4,000 staying in Zakho and nearby villages which came under Turkish control last Monday.

"After the incursion everybody wanted to move (to the camps) because they feared being captured by Turkish soldiers," UNHCR field officer Antoine Lahan said in Dahuk.

Turkish officials have pledged to avoid harming civilians in their drive to stop Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) separatists from using northern Iraq as a base to stage attacks on Turkey.

Hadshi Mohammad, a 63-year-old Kurd from the Turkish city of Diyarbakir, spent the last year in Hizawa, a village about 10 kilometers (six miles) east of Zakho, the Iraqi border town now under Turkish control.

He said he managed to flee after Turkish soldiers surrounded the village with tanks, separated men and women, and searched the houses for gold and weapons.

Fighters with the Iraqi opposition group, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), "told me not to speak," Mohammad recounted as he sat inside his tent in an Atrush camp.

"So I stood with the villagers in my pajamas pretending I was ill and didn't say a word," he said.

KDP officials made it difficult to identify Mohammad and others by telling the soldiers that nobody had an identity card, but seven Turkish Kurds were still taken prisoner, UNHCR officials said in Dahuk.

Abdulrahman Mohammad, who comes from the Turkish border town of Silopi, said "the Turks had a lot of traitors with them—Kurds from Cizre and Silopi. They recognized these seven Kurds."

Eleven families have so far escaped from Zakho and surrounding villages to reach the Atrush camps, he said.

The UNHCR in Geneva expressed fears of a Turkish air attack, while refugees in the camps told AFP that two Turkish warplanes flew low over the camps just three weeks ago.

The refugees began digging ditches to provide shelter in case of attack, they added.

"UNHCR plans to move all Turkish Kurdish families living in Zakho and the villages to Atrush as soon as conditions allow," Lahan said.

"We will do that officially and with the protection of a UN convoy and in cooperation with international non-government organizations."

In Geneva, Colville acknowledged that a UN report Friday that hundreds were fleeing the fighting was an overestimate, saying there were in fact "about a hundred".

But he added, "We don't know how many people will show up. A lot of people are frightened and are in hiding."

Turkish troops have killed 168 guerrillas and destroyed all Kurdish separatist camps since the operation began Monday, Turkish commander General Hasan Kundakci said Saturday in Turkey.

The offensive has taken Turkish troops 40 kilometers (25 miles) inside Iraq and sparked strong criticism from the West.

KDP Spokesman Views Turkish Moves

NC2603204495 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1742 GMT 26 Mar 95

[Interview with Hushyar Zibari, spokesman of the Kurdistan Democratic Party in Europe, by an unidentified correspondent; place and date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] Would you tell our listeners about the Kurdistan Democratic Party's [KDP] view of the Turkish incursion into Iraqi Kurdistan, knowing that the incursion mainly covers areas controlled by your party?

[Zibari] Actually the party has already expressed its stand through its official spokesman and the political bureau. It denounced this massive Turkish military operation, expressed concern, and denounced this unjustified, massive incursion.

This is approximately the seventh day since the military operations began. Considering Turkish military officials'

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statements, we do not believe the operations will achieve their objectives in light of their losses and the statistics they give.

Undoubtedly the inhabitants of the attacked areas have been subjected to harassment by the Turkish troops. Also villages have been stormed and searched and other recently rebuilt villages have been shelled. Frankly we are not comfortable, but rather very concerned about this operation because of two things. First, the damage inflicted on civilians, and second the question of how long it will last. We are trying to learn the timetable of this operation from officials and friends in the region and abroad.

[Correspondent] Our next question is on reports we have received from Iraqi Kurdistan about the transfer of the Iraqi National Congress [INC] headquarters from Salah-al-Din to Irbil. What is the background of this issue and how true are the reports that one of the reasons is a rift between the presidency in general and the official in charge of the INC Executive Bureau?

[Zibari] Actually, I have no information on the INC moving to Irbil or any other location. The INC offices and institutions are still in Salah-al-Din, so far as I know. The INC also has offices in all Kurdish governorates—in Dahuk, Irbil, al-Sulaymaniyah, and other areas. If an office moves to these places, I do not think it shows any problems or indicates that the INC has moved from Salah-al-Din. It is free to decide what it wants and in handling security issues concerning its offices and institutions.

There are no conflicts or sharp differences within the INC, as you say were reported or exaggerated. But there are some problems, which will be dealt with by the INC's legitimate institutions, including the Executive Council. That council is expected to meet soon to assess the INC's status and internal and foreign policies.

Therefore, frankly we do not have such information, and as I mentioned, the INC is free to choose its location in accordance with security and INC considerations.

Paper Blames U.S. for Incursion

JN2403151595 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0930 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 24 Mar (INA)—An Iraqi paper has stressed that the current bloody clashes between Kurdish groups and the Turkish forces' intrusion into the Iraqi territory would not have happened had it not been for the U.S. intervention in the region.

AL-THAWRAH, which speaks for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, adds that tension and instability in that region are the outcome of U.S. intervention and the U.S. Administration's plots, which disregard the sound security interests required by regional considerations and the region's genuine need for stability and development.

The paper says that despite all the beautification efforts and all the attempts to reverse the facts, the U.S. military and political umbrella has produced nothing but an abnormal situation based on spreading deviation and feeding phenomena that absolutely contradict peoples' wills and future aspirations.

The paper says we can see the results of U.S. dealing with the Arab Gulf countries and how it turned those countries into nothing but forward arms caches, military bases, and powerless, constantly fearful colonialist protectorates devoid of any sound political vision.

The paper adds that those looking forward to achieving their national security should realize that the best solution lies in treating the root problem, which is the U.S. intervention, and in refraining from complying with anything the U.S. Administration seeks to achieve through the continued blockade imposed on Iraq.

Concluding its article, the paper stresses that Iraq's restoration of its regional and pan-Arab role after the lifting of the unjust blockade will achieve the aspired regional stability and peace. The paper indicates that none of the current suffering would have occurred had it not been for U.S. action from inside Turkish territory and the establishment of the hostile safe haven by the Americans in our dear Iraq under the pretext of preserving human rights and protecting minorities.

Operation Result of 'U.S. War'

JN2503092395 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0800 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 25 Mar (INA)—The Baghdad-based newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH has said the Turkish military operation in northern Iraq confirms that the blockade imposed on Iraq is generating boundless evil in neighboring countries and in the world and threatening to destroy what remains of the pillars of stability in the region.

In an editorial today by Chief Editor Salah al-Mukhtar, the newspaper, speaking for the government, says that what is happening in northern Iraq has accelerated the emergence of new crises between America and its allies regarding Iraq and the blockade imposed on it. The fact that Europe has called for respecting Iraqi sovereignty is only a prelude to a bolder European position.

The paper asserts that the most significant aspect of the Turkish operation is that Turkey has become, against its will, a primary victim of the blockade imposed by the United States on Iraq. Had it not been for the U.S. war against Iraq that has been going on since 1991, northern Iraq would not have been isolated from the central authority and Iraqi Kurdistan would not have turned into a center of disturbances, chaos, terrorism, and all kinds of corruption. These manifestations have extended to southeastern Turkey and turned it into a disorderly center that threatens to divide Turkey, as several Turkish officials have said.

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The paper stresses that the deployment of U.S. troops in southeastern Turkey and the disorderly security situation have created an ideal environment for threatening Turkey's national unity and turned its territory into a target for sabotage and terrorism. Add to this the fact that Turkey has lost around $40 billion as a result of the blockade.

Thus, Turkey has become an inferno, especially since the failure of the theory of Turgut Ozal, who believed that Turkey had much to gain by striking Iraq and imposing a blockade against it.

The paper refers to the acknowledgement of the United States and Turkey of the absence of authority in northern Iraq and that this region is in the grip of chaos and a lack of security. This is an acknowledgement of two substantial failures: The first is the failure of "Operation Provide Comfort"—in whose name America and its allies have invaded northern Iraq—and the second is the failure to turn the Kurdish groups into an authority with power, prestige, and decisive influence.

AL-JUMHURIYAH adds that the presence of U.S. troops in southeastern Turkey and the fact that northern Iraq is under U.S. air and military control (through Parallel 36) is a gross violation of Iraqi sovereignty.

The paper recalls a recent statement by Tansu Ciller to CNN. Ciller said: If the Turkish operation is in violation of Iraq's sovereignty, then Operation Provide Comfort, undertaken by the United States for years, is also a violation of this sovereignty."

Concluding, the paper expects further differences between the United States and its allies, especially between the United States and Turkey on the one hand and the European group on the other, over the Turkish operation in northern Iraq and the blockade imposed on Iraq. The paper also expects Turkey to take a positive, unilateral step this year if the lifting of the Iraqi blockade is delayed for any reason.

Vice President Ramadan Meets Kurdish Officials

JN2703114695 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1045 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 27 Mar (INA)—Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan has stressed that our Kurdish people will rebel against the Kurdish gangs controlled by agents Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talabani. He said Barzani and Talabani have infringed on the dignity of the Kurdish citizens, who reject humiliation, submission, and oppression.

During a meeting with the presidents and members of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region Legislative and Executive Councils, the vice president said events have revealed the fact that agents Barzani and Talabani are working in the service of the Americans, the Zionists, and their allies.

Taha Yasin Ramadan said that President Saddam Husayn cares about his Kurdish people and that his excellency is keen to provide all their needs of food, medicine, and fuel to ease the suffering they face in terms of hunger, disease, and the lack of security under the spears of the Americans and their agents.

Barzani Forces Claim Talabani Counterattack Repulsed

JN2403202795 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1715 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Following their successive defeats at the hands of our field command and after sustaining crippling blows in their previous attacks, the Jalali [allusion to Jalal Talabani] leaders began to gather their defeated remnants, trying to grab a vestige of victory to save face after having their noses rubbed into the dust.

At midnight on 23-24 March, the defeated remnants, using all their resources and employing all their military preparations, attacked our heroic peshmerga positions in Tut Aghach, (Dalusint), the Nawe village, and (Talbawach) on four axes from Sayyid Sadiq. This time around, as on previous occasions, the eagles of al-Sulaymaniyah and (Garmiyan), the lions of the field command, joined by the Kurdistan liberation army corps, confronted the attackers, inflicting abject defeat on the enemies of the Kurds and Kurdistan, pouring on them the sacred fire of righteous indignation.

These are the eagles of Karkuk-al-Sulaymaniyah who have not rested for the past seven days and nights and never slept, yet they recorded a new heroic epic to be added to their immortal epics. They transformed the battlefield into an inferno, consuming all sinful tyrants, and shook the earth beneath the feet of the treasonous mercenaries.

After a bloody fight, the protectors of our people, the heroes of Barzani, defeated the big Jalali attacks within hours and dismembered their ranks. The victory inflamed the zeal of the residents of the area. Honorable tribes joined our forces and directed their guns at the chests of the enemies who tried to desecrate the soil of that area. The enemies fled in panic and the mercenaries could not stand in the face of the lions of Barzani and the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] forces, the sons of al-Sulaymaniyah, (Garmiyan), and the plain of (Sharazur), the comrades of Jalal Hajj Husayn and Akram Hama 'Ali. The defeated forces left behind a great number of dead. By dawn the next day, the Jalali bats had returned to their dens.

At 1200 on 24 March, the area was completely purged of the Jalali jackasses. The information bureau of the field command appealed to the families of the dead to come to the area without fear to take the bodies of their sons who fell a victim of the lies of the decaying heads of the Union [Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, PUK].

We congratulate you on this victory, o heroes of al-Sulaymniyah and Karkuk. God save your hands.

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As for the mercenaries of the 66 [as heard], enjoy this abject defeat, this lesson, this ignominy.

PUK's Talabani Ready To End Kurdish Infighting

NC2403164895 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Jalal Talabani, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] secretary general, received Dr Mahmud 'Uthman and 'Adnan al-Mufti, two Kurdish political personalities, the day before yesterday. During the meeting, he thanked them for their persistent endeavors to stop the internecine fighting. He stressed that the PUK has been ready to stop the fighting since the day it erupted. The PUK, he stressed, has welcomed all peace overtures and mediation efforts aimed at ending the fighting and normalizing the situation in Kurdistan. He noted that the PUK is always ready to talk about solving the dispute peacefully.

Saddam Recalls Officers; Security 'Deteriorating'

NC2503160795 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Saddam's circles recently recalled a number of retired officers to serve in the military again after A.W.O.L. cases increased among the officers. Many officers fled while some joined the ranks of the Iraqi opposition in the north and the south. Informed sources in Baghdad said the retired officers have been made to join the so-called emergency forces. The regime has entrusted them with controlling the deteriorating security situation in Baghdad and its environs, in addition to tracking down those who refuse to do their military service. The source confirmed that despite the fact that the regime has lavished many things on these officers, many of them have refused to join their units. This made tyrant Saddam issue orders to his criminal son Qusay to investigate these officers and punish those who refuse to join their units.

Saddam Urges Ministers to 'Uproot Weakness'

JN2503202795 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1845 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 25 Mar (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has said that, in this stage, ministers should not accept weakness because a minister is a struggler, who leads the struggle against weakness in the performance of his ministry, particularly in terms of safeguarding the funds and property of the state and citizens. He said: I emphasize the money and property of the state and the citizens because both are part of the national wealth.

His excellency added: Also, the minister, or official, who accepts any weakness, will inflict moral and psychological harm on the good people. Furthermore, such weakness corrupts some people because others will believe this phenomenon is acceptable and does not bother the minister or official.

His excellency said: A minister can be effective if he tackles the state of weakness through accountability, continuous meetings, punishment, and rewards. He can also be effective when people become aware that this weakness has not reached his acts, psychological structure, or social relations.

President Saddam Husayn made these remarks when he chaired the 12th session of the Council of Ministers.

Addressing the members of the Council of Ministers, his excellency said: You must remember that your duty is not only to develop the inherited situation so that it will become better, but also to uproot weakness and develop the criteria, in accordance with which nations measure their experiments on the national and humanitarian levels.

His excellency said: It is natural that you cannot tackle all cases of weakness once and for all because of the size of work and the large number of employees [words indistinct] However, what is more important is to control the more delicate and more serious links, because disregarding these links, particularly in this stage, will gradually turn them into problems. We had an experiment in this regard in the glorious al-Qadisiyah [the Iran-Iraq war], when we asked the commanders to pay more attention to the components of mobilization on the level of junior ranks in the field. Their concern resulted in minimizing the gaps, and this was one of the important factors of the victory of all Iraq and the defeat of all Iran.

His excellency added: Therefore, a minister should not only be interested in major issues, but also in the details which will have major results, particularly in these circumstances.

Giving some examples, his excellency said: If a minister does not know how many times sesame must be irrigated and what kind of soil is good for planting this plant and improving its production, how can the competent minister take his employees into account? If a minister does not know the working mechanism, how can he take into account derelict employees if medicine was leaked from medical stores, or from hospitals? And if a technical gap appears in a mill, which results in the damage of a large quantity of flour, how can a competent minister troubleshoot the malfunction to stop it?

His excellency said: Most of these cases and phenomenons may not need a followup under normal circumstances, however, in our present circumstances each minister, or head of a department, needs to know the details of the major links in the work because this is his national duty, before being his administrative or technical duty.

The Council of Ministers discussed, in its 12th session, the topics on its agenda, including organizational and legislative issues and took the necessary decisions.

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Egypt Cancels Forum Attendance; Butrus-Ghali Blamed

TA2703070295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Egypt has canceled its participation in the international flight-controllers conference because it is slated to convene in Jerusalem. Earlier the UN-sponsored International Flight Organization had announced that it was calling off its participation in the conference.

Senior elements in the Israeli flight-controllers association charged that the cancellations were triggered by the UN secretary general [Butrus Butrus-Ghali].

Our correspondent Yo'av Aviv reports that the Tunisian delegation has already arrived in Israel and that the Jordanian and Moroccan delegations are due soon.

Weizman Reacts; UN Role Denied

TA2703115795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President 'Ezer Weizman says an ill wind prevails over the Nile and that he hopes it passes soon. Weizman spoke at the opening of the International Air Traffic Controllers Conference in Jerusalem.

Earlier, Egypt said it was canceling its participation in the conference. The UN-sponsored International Air Traffic Controllers Association is also not taking part. Senior members of the Israeli Air Controllers Union told Qol Yisra'el that UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali is to blame for both. But both the Egyptian Embassy and the Israeli Foreign Ministry denied the charge. David Ze'ev reports:

[Ze'ev] As Egyptian-Israeli relations continue to be a sensitive subject, an official at the Egyptian Embassy here rejected as out of hand the accusation that Butrus-Ghali convinced Egypt not to participate in the Air Controllers Conference. The Egyptian diplomat, asking not to be identified, said angrily: Butrus-Ghali's only blame is that he is Egyptian. And, the embassy official said, the UN secretary general does not influence the decisions of any country, only of the world body itself.

In Jerusalem, an Israeli Foreign Ministry official echoed the rejection that Butrus-Ghali had anything to do with the Egyptian decision. The official, who said he saw all of the messages sent between Jerusalem and New York on the conference, says the problem is that the conference is taking place in Jerusalem. And, the Foreign Ministry official put the blame on the organizers of the conference for showing, he said, a lack of sensitivity. He said that in the past, when organizers have omitted on the invitations that the conference is taking place in Jerusalem, it avoided difficulties and people participated, in the words of the Israeli official.

One Infiltrator From Egypt Caught, Two Escape

TA2603070595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A three-member squad infiltrated from Egypt in the Rafah area before dawn. An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] unit discerned the squad, capturing one of them. A Kalashnikov rifle was found in the possession of one of the infiltrators. The two others escaped in the direction of the Palestinian autonomy, our correspondent Nisim Qeynan reports.

Identified as Hamas Members

TA2703070595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Two terrorists captured yesterday morning near Rafah are members of the military arm of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. Twenty-four-year-old Salman 'Abd-'Abdallah Maliha of Rafah is a top member of a 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam gang in the south. He has been wanted by authorities for the past two years on suspicion of murdering Palestinians who collaborated with Israel; shooting at IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers; and planning, aiding, and abetting terror attacks.

Details are not yet known about the other captured suspect, Musa Zurayr Wahidi, 21, of Gaza city. The two were caught as they tried to cross the fence separating Egypt and the Gaza Strip. They had two Kalashnikov rifles. Two other suspected terrorists who were with them managed to escape.

Syria Close to Expelling Terrorists From Damascus

TA2703110195 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 27 Mar 95 pp 1, 2

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[FBIS Translated Text] For the first time since the beginning of the peace process with Syria, Jerusalem has received a serious signal regarding a possible Syrian change of heart on the presence of terrorist organizations in Damascus. A classified report which has reached the Foreign Ministry indicates that the heads of the terrorist organizations believe their days in Damascus are numbered.

The report, which has caused great interest among Jerusalem decisionmakers, deals with a recent meeting between Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and heads of Nayif Hawatimah's, George Habash's, and Abu-Marzuq's terror organizations, whose headquarters are located in Damascus. The report also touches on separate contacts between the Syrian Administration and the Hizballah representative. The U.S. Administration has received information stating that Khaddam told the terrorists that their days in Damascus are numbered and that shortly they will have to look for another place from which to operate.

Jerusalem sources reacted with extreme caution to the report which has arrived from high-level U.S. Administration sources. They noted, however, that the classified report is in accord with other information that has recently arrived in Jerusalem indicating that Hizballah is striving to establish an alternative base of operation in Cyprus.

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The reports on the Cyprus bases state that Hizballah is preparing for the possibility that progress in the talks between Israel, Syria, and Lebanon will encourage the Lebanese Government—with Syria's blessing—to take it upon itself to disarm Hizballah and prevent its activity against Israel from Lebanese territory.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz told his Cypriot counterpart that the Lebanese Government will agree to turn Hizballah into a "political party" once progress is made in Israeli-Syrian negotiations.

It should be noted that in its contacts with the United States, Israel regularly demands that Syria act against the terrorist headquarters in its territory in order to prove its seriousness in the peace process. The demand was raised even more forcefully by the Americans themselves as a precondition for removing Syria from the list of terror-sponsoring countries.

The Israeli ambassador in Washington, Itamar Rabinovich, yesterday met his Syrian counterpart Walid al-Mu'allim. This was their fourth meeting since Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to the region. The two continued discussing the principles of a security regime on the Golan Heights within the framework of a peace agreement, focusing on the differences of opinion between the two countries regarding the issue of an "equality" of security arrangements on both sides of the border.

Commentary Urges Active U.S. Role on Syrian Track

TA2403174095 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 24 Mar 95 p 7

[Commentary by Pe'erli Shahar: "Without Kid Gloves"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The resumption of the bilateral talks in Washington between Syria and Israel, 19 months before the elections, is forcing the political echelon to make a tough decision: to drag out the political negotiations until after the 1996 elections and thus risk putting on ice for years any chance of achieving comprehensive peace if Labor falls from power or to take decisive action in order to make peace now.

First of all, one must admit that the negotiations, within the framework in which they have been held for the past two years, are too slow and cumbersome. Moreover, there is no guarantee that their continuation will prove any more successful.

For years we were told and we believed that the State of Israel has always sought peace, while the Arab side blocked progress. This week, Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' shook things up a little when he declared that a peace agreement is attainable within three months.

Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres constantly calls for upgrading the level of talks with Syria, and his deputy, Yosi Beilin, keeps on warning that, at the current rate of progress, no peace agreement will be signed during this government's term in office.

Officials from the prime minister's bureau tend to say that these statements stem from personal frustration over the fact that the negotiations with Syria are being conducted solely by the prime minister's bureau—mainly, in fact, by the prime minister himself.

In principle, I am not particularly interested in who conducts the negotiations or is familiar with every last detail of the secret talks. For me, the bottom line is what I (we) will get out of them.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin says he prefers direct negotiations. He shies away from any U.S. efforts that smack of active U.S. involvement. When Secretary of State Warren Christopher, during his visit to the region, said he was not a postman, the prime minister hastened to announce that the United States is not an active mediator. Ever since the negotiations with the Palestinians and the direct talks with Jordan were brought to a successful conclusion without any active U.S. involvement, Rabin has sought to adopt this format in the negotiations with Syria.

This is where Rabin is mistaken. The negotiations with the Palestinians were different from the talks with the Jordanians, and neither of them are anything like the negotiations with Syria.

In order to back this thesis, I will quote a remark made by Rabin himself only 18 months ago. At the time, Rabin said that history has proven that Israel and its neighbors cannot lead serious talks to a successful outcome without active U.S. involvement. Rabin presented the negotiations with Egypt as an example. This is indeed the plain truth.

In the negotiations with the Palestinians, Israel is only on the giving end. With Jordan, we had peace de facto even before we made peace de jure. The peace treaty is really only a written confirmation of the status quo.

With Egypt, the situation was different. Israel had to make a tough decision to evacuate territory, dismantle settlements, and give up oil fields. The case with Syria is almost the same. We are supposed to evacuate territory, dismantle settlements, and give up water sources.

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and former President Jimmy Carter were very actively involved in formulating the peace agreement between Egypt and Israel. Without their bridging proposals and creative initiatives (as well as—to a great extent—their persistent nagging), the negotiations with Egypt would not have reached their successful conclusion.

Negotiations with Syria will only prove fruitful if they are conducted in a similar fashion. Otherwise, Christopher and Dennis Ross will simply continue to arrive on more shuttle missions, with both men sitting opposite Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad for hours on end, leaving

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us wondering how they can keep from going to the bathroom for so long. [passage omitted]

Netanyahu To Oppose Hebron Settler Evacuation

TA2403170195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu warns that if the government tries to evacuate the Jewish settlement in Hebron, he will be at the head of many people who will show up to oppose it. At the same time, he called on the settlers not to debate with the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] but only with political leaders. Netanyahu visited Qiryat Arba' this morning to pay his condolences to the family of Yehuda Partosh, who was murdered when terrorists machine-gunned a civilian bus on Sunday night at the entrance to Hebron.

Sharon, Settlers View Ways To Oppose Hebron Evacuation

TA2603194695 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 26 Mar 95

[Report by Hezi Makhles]

[FBIS Translated Text] Likud Knesset Member [MK] Ari'el Sharon has called for tens of thousands to put a siege on Jerusalem if the government decides to evacuate the settlers from Hebron. Sharon visited Hebron today and paid a condolence visit to the relatives of the victims of last week's Hazekhukhit Junction attack. Hezi Makhles reports:

[Begin recording] [Makhles] MK Sharon held an emergency meeting today with the heads of the Qiryat Arba' municipality. They discussed how the settlers should prepare for the possibility of the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] being ordered to evacuate settlers from West Bank cities. Sharon says such a command will endanger not only the settlers but also the residents of Israeli cities located near the Green Line. Most of the discussion, however, was devoted to the possibility of an evacuation of the Jews from Hebron. MK Sharon claims that the prime minister is responsible for the exacerbation of the political debate over the settlers.

[Sharon] We are witnessing a hatred cultivated by the prime minister and the government and aimed at isolating the Jewish settlers and causing some of them to leave voluntarily. I believe the government can expect a surprise on that score.

[Makhles] Are you claiming that Rabin hates the settlers?

[Sharon] Undoubtedly, undoubtedly. The statements—which are becoming more and more frequent—express senseless hatred of Jews by other Jews. Have you heard him express himself in this vein with regard to 'Arafat?

[Makhles] After a three-hour meeting, MK Sharon paid a condolence visit to the families of Nahum Hoss and Yehuda Partosh, who were killed seven days ago in the Hebron attack. [end recording]

Minister Denies Report on West Bank Construction

TA2603170695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer has denied a report by the Peace Now movement that the Ministerial Housing Committee plans to approve construction of another 4,000 homes for Jews in the West Bank. Ben-Eli'ezer told reporter Jack Katzenell that no such plan ever existed. He said the ministerial committee is due to meet this week and confirm an earlier decision to build new homes that will number far less than the 4,000 claimed by Peace Now.

Rabin on Political Future, Vision of Peace

TA2503133995 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 24 Mar 95

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by anchor Yisra'el Segal in the studio on 24 March—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Segal] May we please start by asking you, as the head of your family, to settle what the press claims is a dispute in the Rabin family?

[Rabin] What are you talking about?

[Segal] HA'ARETZ reported yesterday that your wife, Le'a, is in favor of your continuing another term, while your daughter, Dalya, opposes this and has asked you to retire.

[Rabin] I know of no such argument in the family. My family knows that I undertook a historic responsibility when I ran in the Labor primaries to be the party candidate for prime minister. I later headed Labor in the Knesset elections in order to achieve national goals which I believe now is the time to achieve. This is what I intend to focus on. It is impossible to conclude all that we have started in one term and, should it be required, I will be ready to continue. I see myself, first of all, as a person who has set out to achieve national goals. The current historic circumstances allow us to change fundamental things in the Middle East and in Israel.

[Segal] From what you have just said, I gather—and I believe you will agree—that, realistically speaking, you will not succeed in achieving all the main goals you envision by the end of the current term. This means that you will in fact....

[Rabin, interrupting] Indeed, I will try to do the most and the best I can to achieve most of the goals in the current term. Naturally, more time will be needed to consolidate and promote them and to continue their development.

[Segal] If we were to change seats and you were a journalist, would you say that I have a headline according to which the prime minister has announced that he will run for another term?

[Rabin] Headlines are not my business; I deal with substance.

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[Segal] You once said that anyone looking for love should not enter politics, because he will not find it there. What are you looking for in politics?

[Rabin] I said that anyone seeking love in international relations has the wrong address. For me, politics is not an end; it is a means. Politics means acquiring the status and ability to shape and change things and to promote one's ideologies on the national level. I have the opportunity to head a government that scored an achievement which we cannot fully appreciate because we lack the perspective, perhaps because not enough time has gone by. I believe that we made a historic breakthrough in promoting peace. I am not saying that we have achieved every goal or that there are no obstacles along the way. Nonetheless, the fact is that for the first time since the State of Israel was founded, we are in the midst of a serious effort to solve the problem of the longest, most painful, and most complicated dispute in the history of the Arab- Israeli conflict: the conflict between us and the Palestinians. We secured a peace treaty with Jordan—the country with which we share the longest border and to which are closest physically. I believe that the peace with Jordan may serve as a model and an example of peace between Israel and an Arab country.

[Segal] Let us return to more pressing issues. Next week, the government will deal with the issue of separation. Allow me to mention two names the media gave it: national Prozac, and a security monster, as the HA'ARETZ military commentator called it. Let us take Hebron, for example. Where will the fence be built: between Bet Romano and Bet Hadassah?

[Rabin] I believe that anyone who tries to analyze and understand the separation idea by breaking it down into tiny details is simply missing the point. Both I, personally, and Labor presented our concept to the voters before the last Knesset elections. We stated very clearly: We do not want to continue to rule over the Palestinians in the territories, because they are an entity that is separate from us religiously, politically, and nationally. What did we mean by that? When we achieve a solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I would like to see the State of Israel as a Jewish state, not inside the pre-1967 borders, with a Palestinian entity that is not a state alongside it. Israel and Jordan, as sovereign states, together with the Palestinian entity, which is less than an independent state, will create a framework for coexistence.

[Segal] How do you reconcile this vision with the idea of a separating fence?

[Rabin] The problem is not fences, and we are not talking about fences. Currently, we are speaking about the beginning of the process of separation. Primarily, we want to reduce the number of Palestinians working in Israel, while not harming the economic relations between the Palestinians in the territories and us. In the more advanced stages, after implementing the Declaration of Principles in Judaea and Samaria as well, we will begin to create a reality that, in the framework of the permanent solution, will bring about a separation that will not take us back to the 1967 borders. Primarily, Jerusalem will remain united and sovereign....

[Segal, interrupting] Forgive me for interrupting, but I would like to ask: I believe that the tension between the settlers and the army reached new heights last week. You also said that a settler costs the state some 1,600 shekels....

[Rabin, interrupting] Incidentally, that is not accurate. I said that an average pensioner receives 1,600 shekels a month, which is a very small sum compared with the investments made in the territories. I never mentioned the figure of 300 shekels. There was heckling throughout the debate and, naturally.... [pauses]

[Segal] Do you fear that in Hebron, for example, the seed of civil war has been sown?

[Rabin] I very much hope that this is not the case. At the same time, one must bear in mind that I distinguish between Qiryat Arba'—a community outside Hebron inhabited by some 6,000 Israelis—and the situation inside Hebron. In Hebron, there are 450 Israelis surrounded by 80,000-100,000 Palestinians. Those who authorized their settlement there created a reality of constant friction that forces the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], under the responsibility of and orders from the government, to protect them. Believe me, this task requires more soldiers than the number of settlers there. The IDF is making the utmost effort to provide them with security.

[Segal] Because you timed this interview in advance, I would like to address the issue of Syria.

[Rabin] No, I believe that we should address the problem that is really bothering the Israeli citizens: personal security in the face of the extremist Islamic terror of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad. Today, it is those groups, as well as the rejectionist fronts, that are the enemy of peace and which carry out the attacks. 'Arafat's PLO has stopped its terrorist activities against Israelis. We must realize that Hamas and the Islamic Jihad have political goals: They want to murder Israelis as such and, mainly, they want to influence the Israeli public on one hand and the Palestinian public on the other to stop the peace process.

[Segal] They are quite successful, are they not?

[Rabin] Excuse me. They are successful because the Likud has turned into a collaborator with Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

[Segal] The Likud?!

[Rabin] The Likud.

[Segal] How is that?

[Rabin] Because it is playing....[pauses] Whenever a murderous terror attack takes place, the Likud turns into an element that issues warnings, but against whom? The murderers? Against Hamas and the Islamic Jihad? It

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warns against the government policy! What does it want? Does it want Hamas to rule the Palestinians or the Islamic Jihad to be the dominant force there? Such a reality will only lead to further terror, to an escalation.

[Segal] You are making a very serious accusation against the Likud.

[Rabin] That is because the PLO no longer carries out acts of terror. The problem is that the PLO is not doing enough to prevent radical Islamic terror from coming from within the territory under its control: Gaza and Jericho. A strange situation has been created today: Hamas and the Islamic Jihad carry out terror attacks—mainly inside the territory of sovereign Israel, where 97 percent of the Jewish Israeli citizens live—to harm the state, and they expect the Likud to start a riot, raise an uproar, and perhaps succeed in reducing the support for the peace process, which is the only fundamental way to attain a solution. The separation of which I spoke earlier between us as the State of Israel not inside the 1967 lines and a Palestinian entity that is not a state is the only solution.

[Segal] What is the main lesson you learned from your first term as prime minister that you implemented in the current term?

[Rabin] I served as prime minister at a different time.

[Segal] Times have changed; that is clear. But do you....

[Rabin, interrupting] I believe I was less ripe politically. I may not be a great politician today either, but I know one thing: I know for certain what is possible today, what is needed to promote peace for the sake of security—though perhaps not immediately—while changing the order of national priorities. I want to focus on education, reducing unemployment, and building the infrastructure. I hope that next Sunday, we will begin to reduce the tax burden.

[Segal] Mr. Prime Minister, thank you.

Allocation to Military Industries, Tax Cut Approved

TA2603170395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] The government today approved a proposal by the defense minister to allocate another $120 million for Israel Military Industries to enable a reduction in its work force. The plan calls for dismissing another 1,300 employees over the next two years.

The cabinet also approved one of three proposals by Finance Minister Avraham Shohat to cut income tax in September. Middle- and high-level wage earners will receive on average an additional 2,000 shekels in their next salaries. Israelis earning less than 7,450 shekels gross will pay 30 percent income tax, while those earning more than 13,500 will pay 45 percent.

The governor of the Bank of Israel, Professor Ya'aqov Frenkel, said the new health tax and rising social security charges in the past year had increased the tax burden, and this was bad for the economy. [passage omitted]

EU Trade Pact Not To Be Signed Without 'Flexibility'

TA2403122995 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 24 Mar 95 p 15

[Report by Galit Lipkis Beck]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Israel will not sign a new trade agreement with the European Union, unless the EU shows at least some flexibility, Tzvi Alon, deputy director general of the Agriculture Ministry, said yesterday, following a series of unsuccessful discussions with three EU representatives this week.

The ministry claims it understood the three, who head the EU delegation for agriculture and processed foods, were coming to conclude the agreement in these areas, but the negotiations were conducted in a very bad atmosphere.

"We were prepared to make very generous concessions to conclude the agreement, but the EU made one new offer, withdrew two offers, and provided no new solutions to the critical list of major issues," said Alon.

Alon said the list includes issues like the entry price for oranges, the export period for grapes, quotas on oranges, turkey meat, and cut flowers. The representatives also failed to agree on processed food issues.

At a meeting between the ministries of Agriculture, Industry and Trade, and the Foreign Ministry yesterday, Industry and Trade Minister Mikha Harish and Agriculture Minister Ya'aqov Tzur said they oppose signing an agreement unless the Foreign Ministry manages to solve some of the major problems.

"We knew that we had to open our market to most of their demands," Alon said. "We made the representatives an offer which would give the EU preferences on all existing exports, plus new concessions—like bringing fat cheese into the country. We gave them positive answers to most of their requests, and in return expected them to improve their offer. But they said no. Under these terms, Israel will not sign the agreement."

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Reportage on King Husayn's France, U.S. Visits

Departs France for United States

JN2303172695 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 23 Mar 95

[Report by Michel al-Kik in Paris]

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn has concluded a short official visit to France and left for the United States. His majesty was accorded an official farewell at Paris Airport. The Royal Jordanian anthem and the French national anthem were played. His majesty also reviewed the honor guard and shook hands with senior French officials who were present at the airport to bid him farewell.

His Majesty King Husayn met in the afternoon with French President Francois Mitterrand. They held a closed meeting which centered on two major issues; the Middle East peace process and bilateral relations. The French president hosted a luncheon in honor of his majesty, attended by a number of French figures and officials. This was preceded by a round of the Jordanian-French talks which was attended on the Jordanian side by Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir and the Jordanian ambassador in Paris. On the French side, the talks were attended by the secretary general of the French Presidential Palace and the French ambassador in Amman.

His Majesty King Husayn is visiting Paris to bid farewell to the French president, whose term in office will end after one month and a half. Following the meeting, His Majesty King Husayn made statements to journalists in which he said:

[Begin recording] [Husayn] We talked about the European role and about our ambition to see a greater French role in the region in the future, not only regarding the peace process, but also regarding more comprehensive cooperation among us.

[Unidentified correspondent] Your visit to Washington, will it take place in order to implement what was previously agreed upon, or to reach agreement on new issues?

[Husayn] To discuss everything. [end recording]

On the objective of His Majesty King Husayn's visit to France, his majesty said:

[Begin recording] [Husayn] I was eager to visit a dear and great friend. I and all Jordanians respect him. I also believe that Arabs respect him. I have known him for many years. I was happy to meet with him. We have discussed everything of interest. He is as interested as ever in all the issues in the region and its future. [end recording]

For his part, French President Francois Mitterrand expressed his thanks and appreciation to King Husayn, and expressed France's stands toward Jordan and Amman's role in reinforcing the Middle East peace process. This is in light of the stands which were expressed by the French capital. These stands stressed the need to extend the necessary moral and material aid to proceed with the Arab-Israeli negotiations and to realize peace in the Middle East region.

French Foreign Ministry sources earlier told Jordanian radio that from the very beginning, Paris has welcomed and is still welcoming the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, and that it is strongly calling for implementing all its clauses. France also supports Jordan's peace efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region. It calls on all the other parties to abide by the pillars of this peace process so as to make it succeed, and not to expose it to any possible setbacks, especially since this will have serious repercussions on the entire region.

The French sources believe that the Jordanian peace approach serves this process and secures the necessary requirements to proceed toward easing tension in the region. The sources said Paris encourages Amman's efforts to give a push to the negotiations despite the gaps in some tracks, particularly on the Palestinian-Israeli track.

Talks Said To Enhance French Role

JN2503094495 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 25 Mar 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Paris (Petra)—The diplomatic advisor of French President Francois Mitterrand said Friday [24 March] His Majesty King Husayn's meeting on Thursday with the French president would enhance the political role France and Europe could play in the Middle East peace process and the economic development of the region.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the advisor said Mr. Mitterrand has affirmed to the King that France, in view of its distinguished relations with the countries of the region, was attempting to advance the peace process and contribute to the economic development of the region.

King Husayn later Thursday left for Los Angeles, to accept an award for peace, before departing for Washington, where he will hold talks with President Bill Clinton and senior administration officials. [passage omitted]

King Accepts Peace Awards in U.S.

JN2503130695 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1200 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] His Majesty the King, who is now on a visit to the United States, has called for ending man's despicable cruelty towards his fellow man.

The king said: "We must all continue to strive to rid our world of such inhumane aberrations."

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His majesty made the remarks during a visit to Simon Wisenthal Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. The center awarded his majesty the king a peace award, and presented Her Majesty Queen Nur with a gift in appreciation of her role in establishing peace.

Earlier in Los Angles, their majesties called at the library and museum of ex-President Ronald Reagan. Receiving him upon arrival, were Mrs. Nancy Reagan and senior state officials and dignitaries.

The king was awarded a medal in appreciation of his role in strengthening Jordanian-U.S. ties and establishing bases for peace in the Middle East.

His majesty delivered a speech in which he reviewed Jordan's efforts over many decades to achieve peace in this part of the world.

King Delivers Speech

JN2503173195 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn and Her Majesty Queen Nur have visited the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. [passage omitted]

In another development, His Majesty King Husayn and Her Majesty Queen Nur today visited the Ronald Reagan institution for freedom in the U.S. city of Los Angeles. [passage omitted]

His Majesty King Husayn was granted the Ronald Reagan peace award in the name of this center in appreciation of his majesty's central role in laying the bases of peace in the Middle East and consolidating and promoting Jordanian-U.S. relations.

His majesty delivered a speech on this occasion. He expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the hospitality he and Queen Nur were accorded at this pioneering institution.

His majesty said: Honoring me this way also honors the Jordanian people whom I have proudly and faithfully served throughout my life to achieve peace in our region and bring about a better future for the grandchildren of Abraham in the Middle East and the whole world. This also honors those who rose and defended Jordan, who fell as martyrs throughout the years and who enabled us and Israel to ultimately achieve our dream and hopes for establishing peace between our two countries and peoples.

His majesty pointed out that the new international borders between Jordan and Israel are guarded by soldiers from both countries without any foreign observers or UN presence. The remnants of the wall that separated us have begun to disappear gradually, as was the case with another wall, which President Reagan called for the removal, which actually took place, he added.

His majesty said: There are some people who cast doubt and who cannot see farther than their limited vision. There are also people who live in darkness and prefer to work for death and destruction instead of life, prosperity, and human dignity. However, we are convinced that the overwhelming majority of our people stand alongside, and support, peace.

His majesty expressed hope that the other tracks will move forward, so our dream will be completed and turn into a reality in the form of a comprehensive peace in the region. This can be achieved if we are sincere toward the people and the coming generations. We owe them this, and we should do our utmost to leave them something after our departure in order to realize a better life for them. This will reflect God's will that the grandchildren of Abraham, may peace be upon him, who are the followers of the three divine religions, will live in peace, tolerance, and mutual respect, and that the cousins will meet together to build a better future for them. By so doing, they will send a message to the world peoples that peace has been established in the cradle of the three divine religions.

His majesty added: In our small world, tolerance and understanding should be possible, and the previous tragedies should not happen again. We should also be partners in building and drawing the future we all deserve. He pointed out that the United States has always been a close friend of Jordan. He said: We have always stood alongside our friends during the years of the difficult cold war. We are now partners in formulating a better future for our peoples.

Concluding his speech, his majesty said: This is a very special moment which I will always recall and highly appreciate, exactly as I did throughout the past years concerning my friendship with President Reagan. I, along with millions of people, admire a man of principles for his achievements, which effected a change that is being enjoyed by our world today on the path of a better future. [passage omitted]

King To Ask for Aid To Fight Violence

NC2603061795 Paris AFP in English 0015 GMT 26 Mar 95

[Report by Randa Habib]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman, March 26 (AFP)—King Husayn will stress the need for economic aid to the Middle East to shore up peace and crack down on militants when he meets US President Bill Clinton during a visit to Washington starting Monday [27 March].

"King Husayn will study with President Clinton ways to push forward the Arab-Israeli peace process and the need to help the region economically, especially Palestinian autonomy," an official told AFP.

"The only way to weaken extremism and terrorism in the region, which is flourishing because of poverty, is economic aid which will help it develop," he added.

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Jordan became only the second Arab country to sign peace with Israel on October 26, following in the footsteps of Egypt 15 years earlier.

King Husayn is to discuss the Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian tracks of the peace process with Clinton, and underline his commitment to "comprehensive peace, the only type which is viable and can be permanent."

The US is a co-sponsor along with Russia of the peace process which was launched at the Madrid conference in October 1991.

On an issue closer to home the king will also seek reassurance on US pledges of economic and military aid to Jordan, the official said.

Clinton promised to write off Jordan's 700 million dollars to the US in gratitude for its peace treaty with Israel.

However the Republican-majority House of Representatives wants to limit debt write-offs to just 50 million dollars this year instead of the 275 million dollars Clinton requested.

US Vice President Al Gore who visited Amman on Tuesday said Washington would meet its commitment.

"Jordan has taken great risks for peace and the US will demonstrate by its action that we are by the Jordanians' side," Gore said.

Gore also reiterated Washington's commitment to meet Jordan's military needs and said the issue would figure high in talks with King Husayn during his US visit.

The king will meet US Defence Secretary William Perry in Washington to discuss ways of modernising his army.

Even though the House of Representatives is reluctant to grant military aid, Clinton's administration has made it clear to Jordan that it can fulfill its promises without going through the House, the Jordanian official said.

Washington plans to provide Amman with anti-missile tanks, jeeps, armoured vehicles and transporter planes from its depots, especially in Germany, he said.

This would have the benefit of allowing Jordan to buy equipment at rock-bottom prices and without any delay, he added.

However its request for F-16 fighter planes has not yet received the green light from Washington and will be discussed by King Husayn and Clinton, he said.

Foreign Minister on Visit, Peace, NPT

NC2603073695 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 26 Mar 95

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti in Washington by Muhammad al-Ashjar in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Ashjar] Can you tell us about the Jordanian monarch's visit to the United States and its framework?

[Al-Kabariti] His majesty's visit comes at a very important time. The peace process is encountering some obstacles. In the meantime, a few opening ups were registered in the past two or three weeks.

The talks his majesty and the accompanying Jordanian delegation will hold with U.S. officials will certainly discuss several aspects, primarily bilateral ties. They will also discuss the peace process in general and the latest developments in the regional and world arenas. The talks will begin with President Clinton. They will then expand to involve officials in the State Department, the Pentagon, and Congress.

[Al-Ashjar] How do you assess Jordanian-U.S. relations at present and do you see an opportunity for further development in the coming period?

[Al-Kabariti] Jordanian-U.S. relations are excellent. We hope they will develop further. When we decided to engage in the peace process and sign the peace agreement with Israel we did not look at anyone else, since peace is ultimately one of Jordan's strategic goals.

As we look to build and maintain peace, we expect the world community, particularly the United States, to help consolidate and maintain this peace. This shows the importance of this visit. We want to see how far the U.S. Administration is willing to support Jordan's efforts to give a momentum to, consolidate and maintain the peace process.

[Al-Ashjar] The agenda of the visit includes meetings between His Majesty King Husayn and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Secretary of Defense William Perry. What do you expect these two meetings to produce in terms of peace and U.S. support for Jordan in the defensive fields?

[Al-Kabariti] As far as the last part is concerned, we believe that only a strong Jordan can maintain peace and play an actual role in the region to spread peace and stability. We hope our meetings with U.S. officials, particularly in the Pentagon, will let us know the extent to which the U.S. Administration is prepared to go in satisfying Jordan's military needs. A long time has passed since we last upgraded some of our military equipment.

As for our talks with State Department officials, I believe that they will deal with the peace process in general, in addition to bilateral ties. We truly want to know the outcome of the efforts the United States made recently to speed up negotiations at the Palestinian-Israeli track, as well as on the Syrian track. We are truly eager to see the peace process take enough momentum to sustain it through the electoral campaigns in both the United States and Israel.

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[Al-Ashjar] Will the Arab position on the extension of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty be among the issues his majesty will discuss with the U.S. President?

[Al-Kabariti] This will certainly be among the topics to be discussed. The Jordanian position is clear; I expressed it during the meetings of the Arab League Ministerial Council. We support the universality of this treaty. We emphasize the need for Israel to sign this treaty. Jordan has a special interest in this matter. The Israeli nuclear reactor in Dimona is only 20 miles away from the biggest population center in the region, the Jordanian city of al-Tafilah. We are interested in subjecting the Israeli nuclear armament programs to international inspection. We will try to persuade the U.S. Administration to urge the Israelis to subject their nuclear program to international control.

[Al-Ashjar] What are your expectations for the peace process on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks; and, will his majesty try to push these two tracks ahead?

[Al-Kabariti] His majesty will learn about the outcome of Christopher's and Al Gore's talks in the region and how far these visits helped the peace process proceed forward. We hope the Syrian and Palestinian sides will continue negotiations until they reach the logical end of securing the full return of rights, particularly the Palestinian people's right to their land. We hope the ongoing Syrian-Israeli negotiations will make progress and accomplish something by which Syria can regain its full right and restore its lands up to the borders of 4th June [1967].

King Ready To Mediate Between PLO, Israel

JN2603193195 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] King Husayn has said he is ready to mediate between the Palestinian Authority and Israel to settle differences between them.

The Jordanian monarch said this in a speech he delivered in Los Angeles in the United States yesterday evening. The king is expected to begin a working visit to Washington tomorrow for talks with President Clinton and Secretary of Defense William Perry.

[Amman JORDAN TIMES in English on 27 March carries on its front page a similar report which reads in part:

["His Majesty King Husayn has said there were 'grave difficulties' in negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians and vowed to help the parties work out their differences.

["At a speech in Los Angeles, King Husayn said: 'In spite of many grave difficulties, the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations continue. We pray for their success.

["'And I would reiterate Jordan's commitment to work with all parties concerned at all levels to help bring about a successful conclusion to the various components of the peace process,' he said."]

Addresses World Affairs Council

JN2603194195 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1700 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] His majesty the king has reiterated Jordan's commitment to a just, balanced, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. His majesty, in California as part of his visit to the United States, made the remark at a dinner hosted in his honor by the Los Angeles World Affairs Council at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. The king said he was proud that Jordan had recovered all its territorial and water rights through the peace treaty with Israel, which was based on UN Resolution 242.

His majesty added that the challenge of peace building required creating ideal conditions to replace the psychological legacy of war and belligerency of the past 47 years. The king warned that radical forces opposing peace would find a fertile soil through desperation and dissatisfaction and called for elimination of poverty, unemployment, and social disparity in facing to this challenge.

The real fruit of peace, his majesty said, was the triumph of hope over despair. His majesty told the meeting that Jordan, through a joint delegation, provided the Palestinians with an umbrella to participate in bilateral and multilateral negotiations with Israel. He noted the Palestinians and the Israelis had signed the Oslo accord in 1993, which was followed by the Cairo agreement, known as Gaza-Jericho First. His majesty commended the United States for standing by the parties in the peace making process and voiced hope that it would pursue its support in the peace building era. His majesty expressed hope that the next 10 years would win the title of "the Decade of Peace" in the history of the Middle East.

The World Affairs Council president paid tribute to his majesty as the man who won the admiration of all in formulating the fate of his country and its people and keeping the region away from the specter of war through signing the peace treaty with Israel.

King Husayn Arrives in Washington

JN2703063495 Amman Radio Jordan in English 0530 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Their Majesties King Husayn and Queen Nur arrived in Washington at dawn today from Los Angeles. Also arriving with their majesties were their Highnesses Prince 'Ali, Hamzah, and Hashim, sons of King Husayn; Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir; his majesty's military adviser; and Jordan's ambassador to Washington.

Their majesties were received upon arrival at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington by top State Department officials and Arab ambassadors accredited to the United States. Also present at the airport to receive their majesties were Prince Talal Bin-Muhammad, the military

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secretary of his majesty the king; Princess Ghayda Talal; the chief of the royal court; the ministers of foreign affairs, finance, industry and planning, as well as Jordan's permanent UN delegate.

Daily Previews King-Clinton Summit

JN2703084695 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 27 Mar 95 pp 1, 23

[Editorial: "The Jordanian-American Summit"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Within the framework of contacts currently underway with officials in the Congress and the U.S. Government and amid the consecutive meetings with the leaders of public opinion in the United States, His Majesty King Husayn will meet with President Bill Clinton at the White House today to discuss a number of topics listed on the two leaders' agenda.

Undoubtedly, the bilateral relations between Jordan and the United States, which have recovered some of their past warmth, will spearhead Husayn-Clinton interests, especially since there are declared U.S. pledges toward Jordan. It is high time to execute these pledges now that Jordan has put a euphoric end to its peace march.

In addition to the U.S. pledge to meet Jordan's legitimate defense requirements and make the current peace process produce tangible economic results, there is a pledge that was restated by the U.S. President, vice president, and secretary of state to scrap the Jordanian debts due to the United States and urge other creditor nations to follow suit.

Given the vital role played by Jordan in the region and its great and positive contribution to lead the peace process to success, it is expected that the results of this process will be yet another topic on the Husayn-Clinton agenda. The United States is aware that without the continuation of this indispensable Jordanian contribution, the process will flounder further and face countless hardships.

Therefore, the common vision of Jordan and the United States behooves the two sides to do their utmost to complete this process, which has been locked in a standstill at the Palestinian track and which has failed to make any tangible headway on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. This renders the peace process vulnerable to all counterattacks staged by the enemies of peace who have been lying in wait for any preliminary steps taken along this lengthy road.

Paper Lauds Gore Trip, Urges Greater 'Cooperation'

JN2603122295 Amman THE STAR in English 23-29 Mar 95 p 4

[Editorial: "Renewing American Commitment"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The visit of U.S. Vice President Mr. al-Gore to Amman could not have come at a better time. It has helped to alleviate the emergence of fears and insecurity among Jordanians as a result of the recent statements made in Congress, regarding Jordanian debts, and U.S. commitment to peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Al Gore explicitly stated that American support for Jordan will continue, and that it will do its best to urge other nations to relieve Jordan of its debt and help sponsor investment and development programs. The point which should be emphasized is that in a jittery region like the Middle East Jordan, which shares the same will and objectives of the international community, should not be left alone to implement practically what has been a theoretical wish by the major powers for many decades and an explosive point in the era of bi-polar confrontation.

The courageous step which Jordan has taken on the path of comprehensive peace in the region must always be supported in a partisan and consistent manner without the habitual surprises which seem to spring from all directions that the Jordanian citizen would have wished to take for granted rather than look out for.

The Jordanian image of democracy and pluralism, which is a shining example for the region to follow, must not be regarded as of secondary importance to other strategic American concerns in the region, be it in terms of commodities or geographical zones. For the future of the region is in pluralism, economic prosperity and political stability.

If American policy does not take into consideration human rights in the Middle East, then such policy will remain unbalanced and uncombined. The future path of the region is in enlightenment, openness, and cooperation. Statements to please certain quarters, irrespective of the contradictory values they hold to those of the U.S., will always lead to skepticism and disillusion among those nations which carry the seeds of the future image of our region. Mostly it is done at their expense.

What is most needed is development and dialogue, unaffected by the twists and turns of politics if properly based on ethical and moral foundations. Jordan cannot always take initiatives emanating from a vision shared universally by all civilized nations, only to be left alone to pursue them. More cooperation and coordination is required. Hopefully, Mr. Al Gore's declarations will last this time, longer than the distance covered on this trip.

U.S. 'Arm-Twisting' on Iraqi Sanctions Criticized

JN2603090595 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 26 Mar 95 p 6

[Editorial: "What Exactly is the Intention?"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The plight of the Iraqi people, long ignored by the world community, is once more becoming the focus of attention. Arab governments are increasingly becoming vocal in their protestations

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against the continuation of the U.N. sanctions imposed on Iraq after it invaded Kuwait in 1990. The 15 members of the U.N. Security Council, after a worldwide U.S. campaign of arm- twisting, agreed to extend the sanctions for another 60 days. U.S. officials have lately been showing satellite photos to Middle East leaders and Washington congressmen of what they say is an Iraqi effort to rebuild its arms programme.

Meanwhile, Rolf Ekeus, the Swedish U.N. official entrusted to enforce the U.N. Security Council resolutions pertaining to Iraq's disarmement, is in Baghdad for talks with iraqi officials ahead of his forthcoming report to the council on April 10. Mr. Ekeus has been quoted recently as saying that he did not recognise the U.S. charges of an Iraqi arms buildup.

Mr. Ekeus is a respected and trustworthy man. But he and his organisation do not determine when the sanctions will be lifted or how long they wil endure.

The U.S., meanwhile, is floating an idea for easing the sanctions. Building on a previous U.N. resolution that allows Iraq the sale of a one-time sum of oil worth $1.6 billion, the Americans—together with the British and Argentine governments—are proposing raising the amount to $4 billion annually.

The measure is apparently meant for two purposes, one to please the Security Council members who are in favour of easing the sanctions, and, two, to put pressure on Iraq and to lure it into accepting the partial lifting. But Iraq, suspicious of U.S. intentions, is most certainly going to reject the proposal. That will in turn weaken the central government and threaten the unity of the country. Whether that will lead to the weakening of the Iraqi regime itself as the U.S. might hope is a big question. Judging from the experience of the past five years this looks highly improbable.

Meanwhile the Iraqi people will be the sole losers in this regional and global conflict that has already claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children and led to a new crisis in the north of the country where 30,000 Turkish troops are now engaged in fighting with Kurdish rebels.

The U.S., its allies and the United Nations must realise that the ostracisation of Iraq has created a vacuum in the northern Gulf and a power imbalance in the whole region that if maintained could lead to dire consequencies. In the Arab World in particular more and more politicians are at a loss trying to explain to their constituencies the logic behind maintaining the sanctions that are exacting a heavy toll on their brethren in Iraq. Calls for an end to the embargo are coming even from members of the 30-country alliance that drove the Iraqi forces out of Kuwait. Apart from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia every other Arab country is on record for ending the suffering of the Iraqi people.

Parliamentary Delegation Leaves for Madrid

JN2503171595 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] House of Representatives Speaker Engineer Sa'd Hayil al-Surur left Amman for Madrid this morning leading a parliamentary delegation to take part in the 93d conference of the Interparliamentary Union, scheduled to open in the Spanish capital from 27 March-1 April.

Parliamentary Talks Held With Algerian Delegation

JN2503205995 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Deputy Engineer Hammad Abu-Jamus, rapporteur of the Foreign Affairs Committee at the House of Representatives, has said fraternal Algeria has a bright image in the hearts of the Jordanians. This image was drawn by the glorious Algerian revolution, the one-million martyrs revolution, and its great people, he added.

During his meeting with Hocine Haydar, deputy speaker of the Algerian National Transitional Council, and his delegation today, Abu-Jamus said Algeria has a distinguished position in the hearts of the Jordanians. He said: We want this position to remain and not to change due to the ongoing regrettable events in fraternal Algeria.

For his part, Haydar said: We in Algeria believe in dialogue and we respect the Constitution. We hope that bloodshedding will stop and that Algeria will return to its normal situation in a democratic peaceful way and not through violence which we do not accept in any form whatsoever. He also expressed his pride in the Islamic awakening in Algeria which is worthy of attention and care.

At the end of the meeting, an expanded discussion was held with the participation of the deputies and the guest delegation on many issues of interest to both sisterly countries, particularly what is taking place in fraternal Algeria. The conferees stressed the need to return to national dialogue and democracy with the participation of all political spectra and currents in Algeria, so this country can reassume its pioneering and important role in the Arab homeland. [passage omitted]

Minister Meets With Algerian Delegation

JN2503195295 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Khalid al-Karaki, deputy prime minister, information minister, and acting foreign minister, has stressed His Majesty King Husayn's concern about Algeria's stability and security as well as Algeria's ability to end its current crisis in a way that will achieve the interest of the fraternal Algerian people by resorting to constructive and objective dialogue.

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At the Prime Ministry this afternoon, Dr. al-Karaki received a delegation of the Algerian National Transitional Council led by Hocine Haydar, deputy speaker of the council.

At the beginning of the meeting, Dr. al-Karaki welcomed the guest Algerian delegation. He reviewed the pioneering Jordanian experience regarding the democratic march, political pluralism, and respect for human rights. He said Arab liberation movements in north Africa stemmed from the Algerian revolution. Earlier, the great Arab revolt was launched under late al-Sharif al-Husayn-Bin- 'Ali in the Arab east. This revolt aimed to reformulate the Arabs' future and achieve their rights to freedom, equality, and justice, al-Karaki added.

The head of the Algerian delegation lauded King Husayn's pan-Arab efforts and expressed the appreciation of the Algerian leadership, government, and people for his majesty and for Jordan's role and constant endeavors to achieve Arab solidarity. He also expressed his pride in the pan-Arab Jordanian position on Algeria in the past and at present. He emphasized Algeria's belief in dialogue as the only way to end the country's current crisis. He pointed out that the Algerian people safeguard their pan-Arabism and religion and reject violence under all covers. He lauded the Jordanian democratic experience. He said: It is a model for us in Algeria. We admire it; its example is worth following.

During the meeting, they discussed bilateral ties and ways to promote them, particularly enhancing bilateral cooperation in the fields of radio, television, news agencies, and publications in both sisterly countries. Dr. al-Karaki welcomed the opening of an office of the Algerian News Agency in Amman.

The two sides stressed their concern about promoting cooperative media relations as part of their joint endeavors to consolidate the comprehensive cooperation between both fraternal countries.

The meeting was attended by the Information Ministry's secretary general, the director general of the Radio and Television Corporation, the director general of the Jordanian News Agency, and the Algerian ambassador to the Kingdom.

Parliamentary Delegation Leaves for Germany

JN2603203695 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A Jordanian parliamentary delegation, headed by 'Abd-al-Hadi al-Majali, first deputy speaker of the House of Representatives, has left Amman for Germany at the invitation of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

The delegation will go on a European tour which, in addition to Germany, will include Belgium and France. During this tour, the delegation will hold talks with a number of officials and parliamentarians on various political and parliamentary issues of common interest.

Members of the delegation are Dr. 'Abdallah al-'Akayilah, Dr. Hashim al-Dabbas, Tawfiq Kurayshan, Muhammad al-Hunayti, Dr. Fawzi Tu'aymah, Khalil Haddadin, Munir Subar, and Sulayman al-Sa'd.

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Hizballah Member Questioned on Plan To Kill Former Chief

NC2403141395 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 20 Mar 95 pp 6-7

[FBIS Translated Text] The security services of Hizballah and the Syrian Arab forces [in Lebanon] are conducting a secret investigation with a Hizballah member, who was held some time ago on suspicion of planning to assassinate former Hizballah Secretary General Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli.

The suspect, who comes from one of the Ba'labakk villages and is a relative of Shaykh al-Tufayli, joined Hizballah several years ago. His initials are 'A.A. He admitted that an Israeli officer established links with him and with some of his colleagues in Hizballah to carry out operations against the party and its leaders. The plan involved renting or buying houses near those in which Shaykh al-Tufayli lives or sleeps in Ba'labakk, Beirut's Southern Suburb, and the south.

Buwayz Returns, Views Arab League Resolutions

NC2403132595 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi reviewed developments with Michel al-Murr, deputy prime minister and interior minister. He then received Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz, who returned from Cairo after attending the Arab League Council session.

Arriving at Beirut International Airport this morning, Buwayz commended the Arab League Council's support for south Lebanon's cause. He said:

[Begin recording] [unidentified correspondent] Minister, you are returning from Cairo after attending the ministerial meeting of the Arab League Council. How do you evaluate the results of the meeting, particularly regarding resolutions on Lebanon?

[Buwayz] As for the resolutions relevant to Lebanon, I believe they are good and acceptable; the Lebanese paper was adopted as presented. Lebanon's papers concerning the situation in the south, the Israeli acts of aggression, the blockade of the southern coast, the detainees, and Arab support were adopted.

As for the extension of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, I believe the Arab League resolution was acceptable, considering the situation the League and its member states are experiencing. So the resolution, I repeat, is acceptable, that is, it clearly pointed to the need for the Treaty to be universal and binding so that it will be adopted by the Arab countries. The resolution proceeded from a principled position, supporting the extension as long as this involves every country, Israel in particular. The resolution also explained that Israel's failure to join the Treaty—the only nuclear state in the region and the primary country concerned with such an agreement—harms the credibility of the Treaty and makes the Arab countries noncommitted to joining it. The resolution calls on the UN Security Council, which is the first trustee of world peace and the body responsible for handling threats to peace, to impose the universality of the Treaty. By universality we mean the need for the countries that possess nuclear weapons to comply with the Treaty. From this premise, I believe the resolution—although expressed in a flexible style to allow coordination with nonaligned countries to secure a majority on the issue—reflected the required content for those who want to be committed.

[Correspondent] Concerning Arab aid to Lebanon, Minister, we learned that the tripartite committee on this subject was revived. Will Arab aid remain ink on paper, as has always been the case with such Arab League resolutions?

[Buwayz] We hope, although the credibility of the Arab countries is much in doubt, that the Arab countries will meet their old obligations. I think this boosts Arab solidarity and Arab credibility.

[Correspondent] You met with Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, and you received a message from the U.S. ambassador in Cairo. What can you tell us about this?

[Buwayz] I think the U.S. message is clear regarding the U.S. position on the extension of the Treaty. We, of course, agree with the United States on the need to extend the Treaty but we do not agree that Israel should be excluded from the Treaty. As for my meeting with Minister 'Amr Musa, I believe Egypt's position at the Arab League session was good. We reviewed several issues outside the framework of the session, and those were linked with the peace process.

[Correspondent] Israel perpetrated new acts of aggression against south Lebanon yesterday and today. It shelled residential areas. Will you call for a UN Security Council meeting or file a complaint with the Council this time?

[Buwayz] Resorting to the Security Council is linked with the magnitude and circumstances of the aggression and also the circumstances and atmosphere of the Security Council. We study each case in light of the facts surrounding it.

[Correspondent] Our last question, Minister, concerns Arab divisions concerning the peace process in the region. How does the peace process look in light of the contacts held among the Arab delegates to the Arab League session?

[Buwayz] I have already said that the resolutions of this Arab League session reflected some minimum level of agreement. It is, of course, way below our hopes for Arab unity and solidarity. But in these bad times, the resolutions reflected at least a minimum of solidarity. [end recording]

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Northern Israel Reportedly Shelled

NC2403124095 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Reports from north Israel say artillery rounds fell on Israeli land near the Lebanese border today. Only material damage was inflicted.

An Israeli helicopter fired three air-to-surface missiles at the outskirts of Shaqra last night.

Elsewhere, a Resistance group detected Israeli movements in al- 'Abbad along the Lebanese-Israeli border in the direction of Mays al-Jabal. The Resistance group rocketed the Israeli troops.

Israeli Naval Blockade Continues

NC2403143595 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The second stage of the Israeli naval blockade of the Lebanese coast has continued for the eighth day in a row. Israeli gunboats do not allow fishing further than 1 km from the coast. Last night Israeli gunboats fired flares over the coastal areas of al-Mansuri, al-Qulaylah, and the al-Rashidiyah camp.

Israeli Shelling of Southern Areas Reported

NC2603163995 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli occupation forces resumed their aggression this afternoon. They shelled the Jabal al-Dahr hills, Jisr Lusi, and the vicinity of al-Dallafah and Qilya with 155-mm artillery from their opposite positions inside the occupied border zone. Security reports state that approximately 16 shells fell on the targeted areas. The occupation troops stationed on al-Ahmadiyah Hill strafed the vicinity of Jisr Lusi with heavy machine guns. The occupation troops stationed in Zummarayya strafed Birkat Mimis, (Qal'at Bayt Nufal), and the vicinity of 'Ayn Fujur with machine guns. The shelling caused severe damage to homes and property.

Also this afternoon, the Israeli occupation troops shelled the hills and heights in Iqlim al-Tuffah as well as the outskirts of Kafra, Yatar, Haris, and Wadi al-'Uyun. In response, the resistance fighters shelled the occupation posts in Humayyid and Rshaf.

Meanwhile, security reports from Tyre indicate that the occupation forces continue their naval blockade of the Lebanese ports in the south. Israeli enemy patrol boats and gunboats cruised in Lebanese territorial waters and prevented fishermen from going far out to sea to fish.

Gunboats Fire at Fishing Boats

NC2703094495 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0845 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] An Israeli gunboat opened fire at dawn today on fishing boats 4 km off the coast of Sidon. The fishermen were forced to leave their fishing nets and return to the port.

Gunboats also opened large-caliber machine-gun fire in the direction of 35 fishing boats sailing out to sea from the port of Sidon. Fishing boats docked in al-Ziri and 'Ayn al-Qantarah ports in the area of al-Sarafand came under warning machine-gun fire from four Israeli gunboats. The fire prevented fishermen from sailing. An Israeli gunship escorted by gunboats was monitored patrolling the regional waters off Tyre.

Jabal al-Rafi' came under Israeli bombardment from the al- Zaffatah position. The Nab' al-Tasah basin, Jisr Habbush, and Jabal al-Rafi' came under raking operations with large-caliber machine guns.

Islamic Resistance Attacks SLA Motorcade

NC2503183795 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Resistance has announced that one of its groups detonated an explosive device under the two- vehicle motorcade of 'Ali al-Khalil, a security official of Lahd's forces [South Lebanese Army, SLA] while it was passing on the road between Bayt Lif and al-Qawzah. The blast destroyed the two cars, both Mercedes, killed four of their occupants, and wounded three others.

While this casualty count has not been independently confirmed, security reports from inside the occupied border strip stated that the explosion caused the death of one person, called Hilmi Mustafa, and wounded others.

At about 1800 today, the Israeli forces began bombarding several areas in Iqlim al-Tuffah and al-Nabatiyah. 'Arab Salim, al-Wadi al- Akhdar, Jabal al-Rafi', al-Luwayzah, Mlita, Mlikh, and the Nab' al- Tasah basin came under heavy shelling with 120-mm and 155-mm artillery from the Israeli positions in al-Zaffatah, al-'Ayshiyah, and the outskirts of al-Tayyibah. Israeli 155-mm shells also fell on the periphery of Kafr Rumman, Kafr Tibnit, al-Nabatiyah al-Fawqa, the outlying parts of Zawtar al-Sharqiyah and Zawtar al-Gharbiyah, and the Nahr al-Litani basin.

Intensive automatic fire from 12.7-mm machine guns was directed at residential areas in Zawtar al-Sharqiyah and Zawtar al-Gharbiyah.

At the same time Israeli and SLA positions in Jabal Humayd and al-Suwayda' were also shelled.

One Killed, 2 Wounded in 'Terrorist' Attack

NC2603074095 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0700 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The terrorists have again targeted civilians in the border strip. At 1700 yesterday, they detonated a bomb on the Bayt Lif-al-Qawzah road as a civilian car was passing by, killing one citizen and wounding two others.

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The terrorist organization Hizballah has claimed responsibility for this terrorist attack.

Buwayz: Syrian-Israeli Talks Test of Intentions

NC2703055895 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has said that the Syrian-Israeli negotiations are a test of Israel's intentions. He added: If these intentions are sincere and this is shown during the negotiations, then it will encourage us and open the way for us to join these negotiations. But if the intentions are not sincere, then this will spare us entering into futile and endless negotiations.

Nasrallah Calls U.S. 'Number One Enemy'

NC2703062295 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0530 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah has stressed that the satan, America, is the nation's number one enemy, adding: We seek no recognition from it.

He added that any Islamic movement that relies on U.S. financial support should know that it will meet a terrible end.

Nasrallah emphasized that Islamic movements should purge their thoughts of Wahabite ideas, because the Wahabi movement is the source of corruption in the Islamic world and stands in the way of unity among Muslims.

Speaking at a ceremony hosted by the Iranian Embassy in Imam Hadi school in al-Awza'i yesterday to honor the memory of the late Ahmad Khomeyni, the secretary general stressed that the Islamic Republic is stronger, greater, and better than ever, in spite of the massive hostile campaign mounted against it by world arrogance.

Fadlallah Denounces U.S. Threats to Iran

NC2503090095 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The suspect campaign that targets Iran with allegations that it wants to own nuclear weapons and that it has deployed missiles and weapons in the Gulf is still triggering denunciations.

In this context, Ayatollah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah has affirmed that Iran has absolutely no intention to attack any Gulf state while Iraq is still weak. Therefore, he added, America wants to resolve its economic problems by forcing Gulf states to buy all its needs from it, thus pushing them to bankruptcy.

His eminence reiterated that America wants to turn the Gulf region into a military [word indistinct] to preserve its interests and surround the Islamic Republic of Iran with a belt of military power [words indistinct].

Fadlallah cautioned that America is threatening Iran saying that it would pay the price of its support for the mujahidin in Lebanon and Palestine, whom it views as serious terrorists. He added that America does not view Israel's occupation of Lebanon, Turkey's occupation of northern Iraq, and Russia's occupation of Chechnya as terrorism under the pretext of the security needs. It allows its agents to terrorize their people and kill the mujahidin and free people, he said.

Allamah Fadlallah wondered why the United States pledges to protect the security of the Zionist being and refrains from protecting the security of Arab states, including Lebanon. He called for a stand vis-a-vis this American attitude, because Washington works to pave the road for aggression against the free people and independent states through the tours U.S. officials make to the region.

Commentary on Goals of U.S. Regional Tours

NC2503084795 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0650 GMT 25 Mar 95

[Station commentary: "A Swarm of American Officials;" from the "Spotlights on News" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] The region is witnessing a swarm of American officials at a time when the U.S. currency is rapidly deteriorating. The link between the two is very significant. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher had just left the region when War Minister [title as heard] William Perry arrived on an expansive tour that took him to many Arab states, particularly in the Gulf. He was followed by U.S. Vice President Al Gore, who is making his own tour to many Arab states.

If the topics the U.S. officials discuss in their tours are diverse and have varying features, the basic topic is marketing U.S. policy in all its political, economic, military, and security aspects and establishing it in the arena. It is worth noting that all the proposals these officials carried are all in the context of serving the Israeli interests. It is perfectly clear that the United States is absolutely bound by the Israeli Administration, particularly under the present weak administration that governs it, the administration that makes no distinction whatsoever between American and Israeli interests. If such a distinction is made in view of a conflict of interests, the consequences will certainly not be in the American side's interest. The Israeli interests are always given priority, regardless of the consequences.

Hence, U.S. Secretary Warren Christopher came to the region to put pressure on Syria to make concessions to Israel and thus maintain the settlement process. When Syria refused to capitulate, the U.S. position turned into pressure to resume negotiations regardless of the results they would produce.

Christopher did not forget in the course of his tour to obtain a commitment from 'Arafat to strike at jihad operations that resist Israel and prevent it from imposing

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its full control quietly on the occupied territories. He then returned to his country, after paving the way for other U.S. officials to play their game.

The war minister arrived, preparing the scene for his tour by threatening the Islamic Republic of Iran. He almost concluded his tour with similar threats. He spread information, no one knows how accurate they are, that Iraq has reembarked on building its conventional arsenal. He insinuated that the Iraqi regime was also trying to resume the production of nonconventional weapons.

Perry did not stop at that; he spread lies that the Islamic Republic was reinforcing its presence in the Gulf and deploying chemical and biological weapons in the islands. He did not forget to repeat the old tune that Iran was seeking to own nuclear weapons.

The basic goal of Perry's tour was to push the Gulf states into depleting more of their wealth in buying American weapons, which they do not need, ultimately sustaining the stumbling U.S. war industry.

It seems that Perry has significantly succeeded in this effort. But the U.S. minister did not overlook the Israeli interest. He put heavy pressure on Arab states to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, regardless of the Israeli position on it. However, this part was not a basic component of Perry's tour, who left the mission to Vice President Al Gore. The latter began his tour in Egypt, in an attempt to put pressure on the Egyptian position on the treaty and force Egypt to go back on its demand on Israel to sign the treaty.

Gore used all kinds of pressure, threats, and temptations to weaken the Egyptian position. He then moved to other Arab capitals to complete the mission. Here he is back in occupied Palestine to report to Zionist officials on the outcome of his mission.

Tomorrow another official will come [words indistinct] as though the region has been reduced to another American state in which U.S. officials walk around without embarrassment and without bothering to make accurate calculations for each visit.

Badly enough, these visits force Arab officials to stay at airports to receive and see their U.S. counterparts off. This diverts them from having the good time they would like to enjoy. But the Arab leaders who occupy themselves with receiving and bidding farewell cannot object, since others are more willing to take this job off their hands. That is why they show full satisfaction and restrain themselves, who knows, the sudden wave of American affection might come to an end and allow them to go back to enjoy themselves. May God help the nation.

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Al-Asad 'Not Concerned' by Next Israeli Election

TA2603104895 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 26 Mar 95 p 6

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad is not concerned about the results of the next elections in Israel because he feels that "the Likud and the Labor Party will pay me the same price anyway."

President al-Asad was speaking at a meeting with Johannes Rau [name as transliterated], governor of Westphalia in Germany. According to a report which reached Jerusalem yesterday, Rau was impressed with al-Asad's "serenity." The Syrian president, Rau said, was interested in reaching an agreement "but not at any price." [passage omitted]

Vice President Reiterates Position on Peace

JN2603073895 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 26 Mar 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an editorial written by Vice President Dr. Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah, AL-BA'TH reviews landmarks of our contemporary history from the political point of view, and stresses that the leader of the Arab nation and the symbol of its glory in modern times is President Hafiz al-Asad, who led the October liberation war and the events that followed. He led the successive steps toward the liberation of the land and the restoration of rights and the efforts aimed to realize a just and comprehensive peace that returns the land and the usurped rights.

The newspaper emphasizes that Syria's position under President al-Asad's leadership is firm concerning the liberation of the occupied Arab territories and the restoration of Arab rights. It says that if the international changes that took place early this decade led to the deterioration of the Arab situation and the departure from the pan-Arab constants by some Arabs, struggler President Hafiz al-Asad emphasized in his pan-Arab and comprehensive speech at the inauguration of the 6th legislative term of the People's Assembly, that the continuation of this situation will not be in the interest of anyone, including those who deviated from the nation's constants and basic values, because he who cannot ensure his interests through ensuring the nation's interests, will not be able to ensure his interests away from nation's interests.

The newspaper adds that Syria is doing all it can to restore Arab solidarity and confront the dangers that target all Arabs. Syria, under al-Asad's leadership, is going ahead in shouldering its pan- Arab responsibilities and carrying out its mission in faith and determination.

Syria's peace positions are firm and are governed by its national and pan-Arab constants. For Syria, peace is a strategic option that is based on the resolutions of international legitimacy.

The newspaper says that Israeli intransigence, its evasion of the requirements of a just and comprehensive peace, its hegemonistic policy, and its adherence to expansionist policy are what obstruct the realization of just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Concluding, the newspaper says, as President al-Asad has emphasized, no one on earth can draw Syria into something it does not want. He stressed that Syria is taking all possibilities into consideration. The nation's masses everywhere in the Arab world, and in light of international changes and the incidents taking place in the region, are looking to Syria and its leader al-Asad because they see in him a great hope that realizes their ambitions and objectives of restoring their rights and preserving the dignity of this nation.

Commentary Urges 'Reciprocal and Equal' Security

JN2503163095 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1235 GMT 25 Mar 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Anyone who closely watches Israel's stands toward a just and comprehensive peace will see no positive signs about its true desire for such peace. Moreover, anyone who closely watches Israel's behavior will notice that it is deliberately creating an atmosphere of tension and aggressive escalation designed to abort the peace process. Israeli political stands are still intransigently rejecting the will of the international community; avoiding the implementation of Security Council resolutions; ruling out the land-for-peace principle; and promoting incomplete solutions and partial, inequitable [la mutakafi'ah], and unacceptable deals that ignore the standard of justice and comprehensiveness that formed the basis of the Madrid conference. The basis of this conference is the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, which stipulate full withdrawal from the Golan, southern Lebanon, and all the occupied Arab territories.

Israel's continuous attacks against secure villages and towns in southern Lebanon are no longer a secret to anyone. Observers can see with their own eyes this escalation of repression and terrorism in the occupied Arab territories and the pursuit of the intifadah and the resistance men, with the participation of the limited self—rule authority. This pursuit began to take an uglier and more violent form after this authority's submission to the orders of the Israeli government, which is good at blackmailing and is taking things into its own initiative now that the Palestinian side has placed its own affairs in Israeli hands and given Israel everything it wants.

All this is accompanied by the increasing tension and serious possibilities confronting the region in the absence of Israel's consideration for or inclusion of a just and comprehensive peace in its calculations. What Israel is doing and offering at the negotiating table offers no

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evidence of its good intentions. It keeps the peace process turning in a circle of doubt, despite the air of optimism which accompanied and followed U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's recent tour of the region.

There is no doubt that a return to the negotiating table, which came as a new Syrian step to show true intentions and to revive the peace process, is not an end in itself, at least not for Syria, which continues to caution against Israel's methods of prevarication, procrastination, and wrangling in order to waste time. Israel is doing so under the basis of negotiating for the sake of negotiating in order to peddle whatever it wants on the Jordanian and Palestinian tracks.

This time, Israel will not be able to prolong the game of prevarication and deception because the mechanism, which emerged from Christopher's recent tour, linked the discussion of the next steps to the outcome of Syrian-Israeli talks on the ambassadorial level with U.S. participation and sponsorship.

It is natural to say that any progress in the peace process will depend on Israel offering something new. Such progress also depends on what the United States will offer, in its capacity as a full partner, in order to push Israel toward committing itself to the Security Council resolutions—which stipulate full withdrawal from the Golan, southern Lebanon, and all the occupied Arab territories—and toward accepting the principle of security arrangements on the basis of equitability and equality [al-takafu' wa al-tasawi] in everything and balance [tawazun] in every situation on both sides of the 4 June 1967 borders.

Moreover, there is no doubt at all that the current round of talks will be a decisive test, not only of Israel's intentions and stands, but also a test of the credibility of U.S. stands and the U.S. role based on what is announced in terms of the U.S. Administration's commitment to work for a just and comprehensive peace that achieves security and stability in the region.

If Israel wants peace, then it knows the way—Syria's stands are clear and firm. Israel must stop looking at peace from the perspective of its hostile interests and its imbalanced criteria, which achieve for it success, a continuation of the occupation, and an imposition of hegemony.

Syria has continuously declared that it adheres to a just and comprehensive peace. It has also made it clear to everyone, near and far, that peace is not an issue of buying and selling. It is an issue of territories and rights and commitments to territories and rights that should fully return to their owners. It is an issue of reciprocal and equal [mutabdalah wa mutasawiyah] security commitments that cannot be for one side at the expense of the other.

Israel Urged To Give Up 'Illogical' Proposals

JN2603154995 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1244 GMT 26 Mar 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Once again, Israeli officials are talking about security arrangements with Syria—in case a peace agreement is reached. They have reiterated that they reject such arrangements being equal [mutasawiyah] and parallel [mutawaziyah]. These statements are most unconvincing. The problem or the obstacle is neither the security arrangements nor their depth ['umq]. The obstacle to the establishment of a just, comprehensive peace is Israel's continued refusal to comply with the UN resolutions stressing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of others' territory by force. The problem is that Israel does not want a genuine peace that ends wars and lays the foundation for a new phase in which peoples of the region would focus their attention on construction, development, and prosperity. Israel wants peace at the expense of Arab territory and rights. If it could, Israel would have extended its security lebensraum deep into Arab territory. This is definitely what it is doing when it defies the world by keeping its military nuclear installations outside the monitoring of the International Atomic Energy Agency and threatens to destroy any peaceful nuclear program in the region, even if it is thousands of kilometers away from its border.

With respect to the issue of security arrangements in particular, there is no obstacle, barrier, or wall that can stop modern warfare. In the October 1973 war, the Egyptian Army penetrated the Bar-Lev Line although it had been described as the most impregnable military barrier in history. The Syrian Army penetrated the Alon Line, which was no less fortified than the Bar-Lev Line. Sophisticated weapons can penetrate any obstacle, wall, or defensive line no matter how impregnable it may be.

Nevertheless, Syria agreed to mutual [mutabadalah] security arrangements, provided that they are parallel and equal on both sides of the border. This is a practical step to establish peace, which is the guarantee for maintaining regional security and stability for all. Israel's security pretexts cannot stand before any logical, objective, or even military analysis. There are no grounds for the allegation that Israel's security is threatened. Syria and the Arabs cannot accept that allegation or accept the Israeli pretexts which will only leave Arab security jeopardized, as it has been for the past half-century. Consequently, the security arrangements issue is nothing but a flimsy pretext through which Israel is trying to obstruct the peace process and avert the requirements of a just, comprehensive peace.

When Israel gets rid of those obsessions and gives up its impossible and illogical proposals, then the Washington talks will be able to provide the appropriate grounds for genuine headway toward the establishment of the desired peace.

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Newspapers View Israeli Role in Peace Process

'Full Peace Requires Full Withdrawal'

JN2503100195 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 25 Mar 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a commentary under the headline "Full Withdrawal First," AL-THAWRAH comments on the objective Israel seeks to achieve by obstructing the Middle East peace talks. It is no longer a secret that Israel hides its intransigence and resorts to various obstructive methods to prevent the Washington talks from breaking the deadlock in the peace process and achieving a just and comprehensive peace.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Syria, on the other hand, has shown eagerness to save the peace process by offering one opportunity after another to resume the talks. The purpose of the talks is to reactivate this process to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in accordance with the foundations on which the peace process was launched—UN Resolutions 242, 338, and 425 and the land-for-peace principle.

AL-THAWRAH goes on: For the Washington talks not to meet the same fate of the previous rounds—failure—the United States, as an honest broker sponsoring and taking part in the talks, should put an end to Israel's intransigence and force it to comply with the most important foundations and requirements of a just and comprehensive peace. Those requirements are represented in Israel's full withdrawal from the Golan, southern Lebanon, and the rest of the occupied Arab territories and returning to the 4 June 1967 lines. This is because full peace requires full withdrawal first and foremost.

TISHRIN comments on Israel's anti-peace approach, stressing that the Zionist danger shall remain as long as the occupation of territories is in place and the settlements and settlement activity are continuing.

The paper adds: By holding the international community responsible for Israel's recalcitrance and endeavors to trigger an arms race in the region, the Arab League Council has identified the problem. Israel would not have adopted this aggressive approach had it not been for the huge aid offered to it and for the Western world's disregard of its schemes and serious violations of international agreements, charters, and resolutions.

TISHRIN adds: In spite of this, some Arabs are specifically responsible for promoting this Israeli arrogance because they concluded separate and unfair agreements with it and are rushing to normalize ties with it, as if the Zionist danger has been eliminated. This danger still exists for the Palestinian people directly, and is threatening Syria and Lebanon and the entire Arab nation.

The paper concludes: Hence, returning to solidarity and to the foundations of joint Arab action and full commitment to the Arab League's Charter and resolutions is the only way to restore Arab lands and rights and secure a better future for the entire Arab nation.

'Maneuvering, Procrastinating' Hit

JN2703064295 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 27 Mar 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "Conditions for Peace," AL-BA'TH says in an editorial today: Whenever U.S. mediators begin meetings with the Syrian and Israeli ambassadors in Washington, Israel tries to give the impression that the talks are nearing an agreement, while at the same time it is the Israeli conditions and proposals that constitute the biggest and most difficult obstacles in the talks.

The paper says: The objectives of this Israeli method are well known. Israel always tries to show that it is advocating peace while Syria is the one obstructing the talks instead of Israel.

AL-BA'TH adds: Because the current talks in Washington were held on the basis of a U.S. pledge to ensure the success of the peace process, Syria, for its part, pledged not to obstruct the peace efforts. The U.S. Administration is indeed convinced that Syria is interested in achieving peace, but not the kind of peace than cannot endure.

AL-BA'TH notes that the moves under way through U.S. diplomatic channels confirm that Israel is maneuvering and procrastinating.

Concluding its editorial, AL-BA'TH stresses that the Syrian position is clear and frank and does not require any further interpretations or analyses. The simple fact is that Syrian territory is being occupied and that its condition for peace is the return of that territory in full, with an Israeli commitment to implement the international resolutions and agreements.

Moves Against Lebanon Criticized

JN2703085195 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 27 Mar 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In its editorial today, TISHRIN discusses the ceaseless Israeli attacks against south Lebanon, saying that Israel which, for almost 10 days now has been imposing a tight naval siege on the Lebanese coastal areas, is trying to pressure Lebanon in an effort to weaken its position, which rejects Israeli plans and programs. Israel is also trying to strike at the strong relationship between Syria and Lebanon and threaten the march of accord and peace in Lebanon.

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The paper says: With its course and policy, Lebanon has confirmed that it will not accept any alternative to the liberation of its land in the south from Israeli occupation, or any alternative to the real and full implementation of Resolution 425.

TISHRIN adds: Events and developments have confirmed that Syrian-Lebanese brotherly ties, cooperation, and coordination are stronger than all Israeli attempts. They are also stronger than all the aggressions and acts the Israeli Government seeks to employ to undermine the Syrian and Lebanese unified pan-Arab stand on the peace process.

The paper stresses that Syria's support for Lebanon's national and pan-Arab position constitutes the real ground for brotherly ties based on cooperation and coordination and the unity of the Syrian and Lebanese tracks to respond to, and foil, the Israeli proposals. This aims to defend Lebanon, guarantee its existence, and protect its future within a framework of a pan-Arab orientation, in terms of affiliation, sovereignty, stand, and course.

Therefore, the Lebanese national insistence on resisting occupation means an insistence on foiling all Israel plans that seek to maintain occupation and to weaken Lebanon's principled and firm position on the basic elements of the peace process.

TISHRIN concludes by saying: Resistance is not only a national duty, but a responsibility guaranteed by international charters, agreements, and laws. Resistance is the product of occupation and will continue and escalate as long as occupation continues. This means that the source of tension in the south is Israel, which is fully responsible for the consequences of its occupation and savage attacks against the southern Lebanese villages and towns. Complete Israeli withdrawal from the south and the Golan Heights is the only way to put an end to the Israeli acts and the occupation troops' provocations and aggressions.

Nuclear Weapons on Interparliamentary Agenda

JN2603192695 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A People's Assembly delegation under Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah left Damascus this morning to take part in the Interparliamentary Union's [IPU] 93d conference and the IPU council's 156th session, which will be held in the Spanish capital, Madrid, from 27 March-1 April. The conference and the council will discuss a host of international and regional political, economic, and parliamentary issues of interest to legislative councils throughout the world.

The Syrian parliamentary delegation requested that a new item be added the conference's agenda. This item deals with parliamentarians' role in making the Middle East a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. It also requests that the states which have not signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty do so. It also refers to all UN resolutions concerning the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East and stresses the basic provisions of the resolutions calling on those parties directly concerned to urgently consider taking the required practical steps to implement the proposal for setting up a zone free of nuclear weapons in this region. The additional agenda item also calls on those parties directly concerned to officially announce, pending the establishment of such a zone, that they will refrain from producing nuclear weapons and nuclear detonators, and that they will refrain from acquiring and possessing such weapons.

The item urges all concerned parties to agree to bring all their nuclear installations under the guarantees of the International Atomic Energy Agency. It also asks them to state their support for the establishment of this zone and to convey this pronouncement to the UN Security Council for consideration as warranted. [passage omitted]

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Afghanistan

Taleban Faction Spokesman Denies Reports of Defeat

LD2503122095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A spokesman of the Taleban faction has denied repeated defeats of his group in the surroundings of the Afghan capital.

According to the Islamic Republic of Iran's news agency IRNA from Islamabad, Mawlawi Mofti Ma'sum has said in an interview that: We are presently facing a severe shortage of personnel. However, we are trying to remove this very problem.

The Taleban force and troops loyal to President Rabbani have been clashing heavily around Kabul since 25 days ago, and the government forces have so far gained some victories during these fierce battles.

Kabul Calm; Foreign Embassies Asked To Reopen

LD2603101595 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Almost a week after the fall of Taleban bases in the south and south-western suburbs of Kabul, reports coming from Kabul speak of calm in the Afghan capital. During that period there has been no exchange of fire between rival groups.

According to a report by the Central News Unit, with the return of tens of thousands of people to their homes, Kabul has acquired a difference look. Streets and the bazaars in the city are witnessing the activities and presence of masses of people.

According to the same report, a group close to the government, known as the Forum of the Afghan Servants of Peace [Majma'-e Khedmatgozaran-e Solh-e Afghanistan], in a statement broadcast last night by Kabul television, has called on friendly states for the swift reopening of their embassies in Kabul.

Rebel Commanders Surrender in Baghlan

LD2603164895 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Five commanders of the militiamen and their men surrendered today to the forces of the Islamic Army in some parts of Baghlan Province.

According to reports received by Bakhtar Information Agency, Mullah Hamidullah, deputy head of the militiamen's Brigade 55, and four other commanders—Abdul Rahim, Ali Hayder, Gholam Mohammad and Hamidullah—came to the side of the Islamic Army along with (?700) of their men after realizing the truth about the Islamic state.

They are equipped with 10 heavy weapons and 50 Kalashnikov machine-guns. Thus, a large region in Baghlan Province came under the control of Islamic sovereignty.

Taleban Group Attacks Government Positions West of Kabul

LD2703075795 Tehran IRNA in English 0659 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, March 27, IRNA—A spokesman for the Afghan Taliban group announced in Peshawar Sunday that forces of the group have attacked positions of government forces in an area 30 km west of the capital city Kabul.

Speaking to IRNA, the spokesman said that during the attacks a number of forces supporting Borhanoddin Rabbani have been killed, wounded or captivated.

The area which was attacked by Taliban forces is one of the strongholds of Hezb-e-Ettehad-e-Eslami lead by 'Abdol Rasul Sayyaf. The spokesman added that clashes have been also reported between the two sides in areas in west of Kabul which are mainly under the control of Taliban forces.

Envoy Pledges Government Will Not Attack Taleban Positions

LD2703083695 Tehran IRNA in English 0749 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, March 27, IRNA—The Afghan charge d'affaires to Islamabad Sunday announced that as long as government positions in southern and western Kabul remain safe from attacks by Taleban group, government forces will launch no assault against the group.

The official told IRNA here that the objective behind recent attacks by Rabbani forces on Taleban's positions was to save Kabul from the group's rocket attacks.

In the past two weeks, Afghan Government forces have been successful in pushing back Taleban forces to Mohammad Agha area, 30 km south of Kabul.

Stressing that Rabbani forces could make further progress, the official remarked that government forces would not attack the group as long as Taleban did not plan new assaults.

The diplomat said that the situation was normal and calm in Kabul in recent days, adding that efforts were under way to re-open schools and universities in the capital city.

Government Forces Continue Attacks on Taleban Positions

LD2703102295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Reports from Afghanistan indicate that clashes between government forces and the

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Taleban continued in the Artmandi region in Paghman Monday. The clashes, which started yesterday morning, have caused casualties. Paghman is 30 km west of Kabul.

The government forces continued aerial and artillery bombardment of Taleban positions in Maydan Shahr, center of Vardak Province, in West Kabul today.

Iran

Tehran Views Gore's Visit to Middle East

NC2703083895 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish 1630 GMT 24 Mar 95

[Unattributed commentary: "Vice President Gore's Visit to Palestine"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Vice President Al Gore arrived in Palestine to hold official talks on Thursday [23 March]. He visited Oman, Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia earlier. Gore held talks with officials of the Zionist regime and later met Yasir 'Arafat on Friday.

Many U.S. and European diplomats have visited the Middle East during the past few weeks. The visits to the region by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry, British Prime Minister John Major, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, and Vice President Al Gore cannot be regarded as unimportant. Political observers are convinced that the military and political activity in the region and the arrival of high-ranking U.S. and European officials are linked with two reasons. The first of these is related to arms sales to the Middle East and the second to the consolidation of Israel's security and superior strength in that sensitive and strategic area. Political circles have drawn attention to the competition between the United States and Europe on the sale of arms to the Arab regimes. France and Britain are the two leading countries struggling against the United States to place the arms markets under their control.

Obviously the United States wants to convert the Middle East into an arms depot and keep the key in its pocket. Al Gore held talks with the Zionist regime's officials in Tel Aviv. He informed them that the United States will not change its policy on Israel's security and defense. He also said the United States will see to it that the Zionist Israeli regime maintains superiority. All that and the $1.8 billion the United States gives to Israel in the form of aid, not to mention the dozens of F-15 and F-16 aircraft it has given to that country as a grant, must be considered when the Middle East's not so bright future is assessed.

Considering all that, we wish to stress that the United States' converting the region into an arms depot will harm the economic structure of the countries in the region. That will only serve the interests of the Western capitalist circles and the Zionist regime.

UN Envoy Refutes U.S. Claims on Chemical Weapons

LD2503145495 Tehran IRNA in English 1436 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 25, IRNA—Iran's permanent envoy to the United Nations Kamal Kharrazi has refuted as "baseless and fictitious" U.S. claims that Iran has deployed chemical weapons on its islands in the Persian Gulf.

The goal of the U.S. in making such allegations is to gain access to the lubricative arms markets of the region, Kharrazi said in an interview with the Cable News Network (CNN) Friday.

Kharrazi stressed that it seems that the U.S. is not only seeking access to conventional arms markets but also wants to sell chemical weapons, and in order to achieve this goal Washington must level such accusations. As a matter of fact, the Islamic Republic is against possessing chemical weapons because it has been among the first victims of such arms, Kharrazi said. In addition, he said, Iran has been among the first countries to call for a ban on the use of chemical weapons.

Regarding Iran's military buildup in the region, Kharrazi said that strengthening of Iranian forces was only aimed at defending Iran's frontiers.

"Our defense is certainly of strategic nature because we have been threatened by Israel and others and we should defend ourselves," he said.

Asked to comment on allegations that Iran is in quest of nuclear weapons, Kharrazi reiterated that Iran by no means is after nuclear weapons.

"We are just trying to obtain access to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. We are opposed to production of nuclear weapons and we have no intention to do so," he said.

Questioned whether iran would unconditionally sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in the next month NPT review and extension conference, Kharrazi said Iran favors conditional extension of the treaty. The Iranian U.N. envoy said that the decision should be taken unanimously by all signatories to the NPT in the next month conference.

As for Tehran-Moscow nuclear deal, Kharrazi said that Iran intends to find alternative energy sources and it is quite natural for it to have access to such sources. He said Iran's nuclear program should not be a matter for concern for other countries because it was meant for peaceful purposes and that everything was under control and supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

On cancellation of Iran's oil deal with the American oil company Conoco, Kharrazi said there are so many companies and countries willing to enter into such a

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deal. If Conoco fails to respect its signature, there are so many other firms eager to do the deal.

Asked to comment on military operations in Northern Iraq by Turkish troops, Kharrazi said Iran opposes terrorism and believes that terrorism should be countered. However, he added, Iran is concerned about the safety of Iraqi civilians and Iraq's territorial integrity. He said that Iran believes that Turkish troops should withdraw from Iraqi soil as soon as possible.

On possibility of opening channels for Tehran-Washington negotiations, Kharrazi said that as long as the Americans continue raising their claims against Iran or fail to show good will for settling their problems with Iran, there will be no basis for dialogue between the two countries.

U.S. Bid 'To Cause Fear' in Arab Countries Seen

Allegations 'Lack Military Sense'

LD2303133395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0945 GMT 23 Mar 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Simultaneous with a tour to the sultanates in the southern shores of the Persian Gulf by U.S. Vice President Al Gore and U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry, the U.S. Government once again accused Iran of building up its military force in the islands at the mouth of the Persian Gulf. This time, allegation of deploying chemical weapons was added to the previous allegations.

The U.S. Vice President said: Iran is a threat to shipping in the vital waterway of the Persian Gulf, that is, the Strait of Hormuz. Of course, it is not at all a new practice that U.S. officials are making allegations against Iran. Such allegations have been made again and again under various names in the past. Every time they have been confronted with a strong response from the Islamic Republic of Iran's Government and the nation.

In response to the latest remarks of the U.S. secretary of defense, the Islamic Republic of Iran said the allegations by the U.S. secretary of defense lack military sense. A spokesman for our country's Foreign Ministry also rejected the U.S. allegations and, referring to Iran's commitment to international conventions, said the country would adopt any measure necessary to defend itself.

The fact of the matter is this: Making such remarks as the U.S. secretary of defense did on Iran's vague threat against the regional peace and stability is more an attempt to justify the U.S. extensive military presence in the Persian Gulf. America, contrary to all international norms, has imposed its illegitimate presence on nations of the region and is endangering its security and stability. The Islamic Republic of Iran has, by now, proved that it attaches more importance than any other country in the region to security and stability of the Persian Gulf's vital waterway. In order to maintain this region's security and tranquility, it has always stretched a hand of friendship and cooperation towards the littoral states of the Persian Gulf.

The Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates that the regional countries have the capability and legitimacy to maintain the Persian Gulf's security and tranquility through close cooperation with one another. Basically, there is no need for the illegitimate presence of the aliens in this region. In fact, the main factor responsible for disturbing the region's stability is the same illegitimate and uninvited presence of the foreign powers. No doubt this stance of the Islamic Iran does not please U.S. officials, who exploit the Iranian threat to justify their military presence to the Persian Gulf littoral states.

Many political experts believe that U.S. diplomatic efforts against Iran, including the latest stance of that country's secretary of defense during his tour of the Persian Gulf region, are scare tactics, an immediate outcome of which was signing of new military contracts to sell piles of out-dated weapons to the regional countries. This matter plays a significant role reviving U.S. armament industries and will save them from bankruptcy. However, the regional countries will become more dependent on America in military and political fields, without enjoying any greater degree of security in real terms; for the condition of these weapons makes them useless against the arch enemy of the Muslim and Arab nations of the region, that is, Israel and its supporters.

Some experts attribute the stance of U.S. officials against Iran to the power struggle between the Democrats and Republicans in the United States. These experts believe that under the existing circumstances the Clinton administration is desperate to repair the broken face of its foreign diplomacy. The failure of U.S. regional policies in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East during the past two years is an important factor contributing to the ever-increasing weakness of the Clinton government.

No doubt the Iranian nation, which has gained good experience in frustrating the previous U.S. Governments in their confrontation with Islam, will once again make U.S. authorities taste the bitterness of their new challenge.

U.S. Seen Exploiting Regional Disputes

NC2403135295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish 1630 GMT 23 Mar 95

[Unattributed commentary: "U.S. Designs on the Persian Gulf"]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry has reiterated his view in Kuwait that the Islamic Republic of Iran is a significant threat to the region. It will be recalled that Perry embarked on a visit to the Arab countries in the southern part of the Persian Gulf. In an effort to substantiate his argument, he said that Iran has fortified the islands close to the Strait of

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Hormuz with troops and various types of arms. Two destructive wars were fought in the Persian Gulf during the past 10 years. They are enough to confirm the region's political and military importance. It is interesting that the two wars were kindled by the Iraqi Administration's onslaughts against its neighbors, which were aimed at disrupting their territorial integrity. Yes, Iran was the first to be attacked and Kuwait was the next.

Considering that, we wish to ask who were those who reinforced Iraq's military strength and encouraged it to attack its neighbors? Obviously, the designs that were drawn up by the imperialist U.S. officials to place the region under their control were behind Iraq's aggression. The United States prepared the ground for the two wars in order to place the Arab countries, particularly the oil-rich shaykhdoms in the southern part of the Persian Gulf, under its control. Washington wishes to exploit the disputes and confusion in the region to sell arms to the Persian Gulf countries. Furthermore, it wishes to force the countries in the region to be dependent on the United States. That will give it an opportunity to realize the imperialist U.S. objectives. The region is rich in oil. In view of that, the Western forces feel compelled to establish a foothold in the littoral countries. In fact, that is why William Perry has tried to cause fear in the Arab countries by warning them that Iran has reinforced its military strength. Obviously, they will now feel a greater need to depend on the United States in order to be able to resist the illusionary threat of an Iranian attack. Naturally, all that clearly indicates the objective behind the military propaganda campaign the imperialist U.S. officials have maintained against Iran. Perry's statement that Iran has fortified the three islands close to the Strait of Hormuz is an addition to the unfounded claims he made against Iran in the past. He has claimed that Iran has deployed chemical weapons on those islands. Even if that were true, the matter would concern only the countries in the region and not the United States. However, the United States is occupied with drawing up new, long-term designs on the Persian Gulf. Considering that, the countries in the region, particularly those in the southern part of the Persian Gulf, have to be vigilant and cooperate.

'Deliberate' U.S. Moves Seen

LD2503202495 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 25 Mar 95

[Unattributed commentary: "Western Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf as Viewed by Guardian Daily"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The claims of U.S. administration officials, depicting the Islamic Republic of Iran as dangerous in the Persian Gulf, have brought diverse reactions from political and news circles in recent days. The British-based daily GUARDIAN, devoting a report on this matter in its Friday 24 March issue, wrote, while quoting military experts, that the U.S. claims on the offensive nature of Iran and its being a serious danger to the region only amounts to a clamor, lacking in any political merit and value.

Elsewhere in its report, the GUARDIAN, in referring to the false propaganda waged by America against Iran, adds that some officials of Britain's ruling clique, as well as non-aligned observers believe that the U.S. is playing a game in this regard. In the GUARDIAN's article reference is also being made to this point that America is using these claims as a ploy for selling more weapons to the Arabs in the region. The daily GUARDIAN, in confirming this matter, has referred to the goals behind the big arms exhibition held in Abu Dhabi last week. At this exhibition major arms manufacturing countries, including America, Britain, France, and Russia engaged in a close rivalry in a bid to secure a bigger share in the arms market. According to the GUARDIAN article, during the years 1990 and 1993 over 55 billion dollars worth of weapons were sold to the Persian Gulf region with America earning 19 billion dollars and Britain 14 billion dollars, thus having the biggest shares in the arms sale. This trend clearly shows that the propaganda policy of the West, especially that of the United States and Britain, in depicting the Persian Gulf as insecure is a deliberate and deceitful move aimed at advancing their own illegitimate designs in this sensitive region. But this trend, in view of saturation of the captivity of the Arab states' arms depots which has turned them into a powder keg, has created much concern. In the opinion of experts the side-effects of this measure will be very dangerous for their domestic economies as well also political stability. This matter has already entailed adverse effects in the internal situation of some Arab states of the Persian Gulf region, including Saudi Arabia.

'Recent Propaganda Hullabaloo' Assailed

LD2603124095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0944 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. defense secretary, on his return to his country, briefed Congress deputies on his achievements during his recent tour of the Persian Gulf region. He announced that he has been successful in concluding new agreements for the sale of arms to Arab states in the Persian Gulf region, valued at $1 billion. Among those the U.S. firms have received the largest order from Saudi Arabia which includes 130 pieces of artillery and ammunition costing $690 million.

Taking into consideration the unprecedented economic crises in the southern Persian Gulf states and their increased foreign debts—especially Saudi Arabia—after the Oil War [second Persian Gulf war] and reduced oil prices, political observers did not envisage those states to shows much inclination to buy more arms. It seems that the recent tour of the region by the U.S. defense secretary—which took place within several days of the U.S. Joint Chief of Staff's visit to the Persian Gulf Arab littoral states—was effective in provoking those states to make fresh arms purchases from Washington.

U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry's visit to the Persian Gulf region coincided with a large arms fair held

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in Abu Dhabi. He tried to whip up sales for the U.S. arms dealers by making use of that opportunity. During his tour, the U.S. defense secretary repeatedly described the Islamic Republic of Iran as a threat to the stability and security of the region and endeavored to convince the heads of the Arab states in the region to turn the southern littoral area of the Persian Gulf into a U.S. arms depot and put more military bases in their territories at America's disposal.

Political experts believe that the United States' objective in making the recent propaganda hullabaloo against the Islamic Republic of Iran is not merely confined to paving the ground for further arms sales but also the White House is intent on strengthening and continuing its military presence in the region in order to control the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf; particularly since the United States will be losing its pretext for its military presence in the Persian Gulf with the imminent lifting of international sanctions against Iraq. Moreover, Washington and London intend to prevent an improvement of ties and expansion of cooperation among the states in that region. Therefore, it is justifiable to create tension and an atmosphere of mutual pessimism among the Persian Gulf regional states and thereby maintain their economic and political interests in this crucial and sensitive region.

U.S. Policies in Region Examined

NC2403172995 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 16 Mar 95 p 16

[Commentary by Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh: "The U.S. Military Moves in the Middle East"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Simultaneous with the visit by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to the Middle East, the advisers, brokers, and armed forces of that country have galvanized their activities in the region.

These moves are geared to boosting Washington's stances on important political developments in the region, developments such as imposing the Zionist regime on the region, the policy of the dual containment of Iran and Iraq, and finally, the solution of the Afghanistan problem within the framework of an American plan directed by the CIA and with the cooperation of some of the regional governments.

From the middle of Esfand [20 February-20 March] until the beginning of Khordad [23 July-22 August] the region will witness two series of maneuvers in tandem in the Persian Gulf waters and in occupied Palestine. In these relatively long-term maneuvers, the Pentagon forces will hold joint maneuvers with Kuwaiti forces on the one hand and with the Zionist regime's forces on the other.

The maneuvers with Kuwait are a natural follow up of the shield of support extended by the external friends of the region (!) over those countries that were observed to be vulnerable, especially in the 1990 Kuwaiti crisis and the Persian Gulf war.

The above measures began with the threats and chastisement of Iraq but recent claims by Western circles view them in the context of the plan for the dual containment of Iran and Iraq. Recently, Western political circles have been reporting on the deployment of Iranian missiles at the mouth of the Strait of Hormuz! This issue, which is being pursued by Washington with much apprehension, will play an effective role in delineating the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the aforementioned maneuvers.

Similarly, the joint maneuvers in occupied Palestine are also to be held with Washington's age-old objective to transform Tel Aviv into the region's superpower. This plan is being buttressed with the propounding of the differences on the nuclear issue among the sides involved in a compromise with that country on the one hand, and with the alleged claims of Iran's nuclear threat (!) on the other. The overall impact of this plan could create conditions to impose the existence and subsequently, the power of Israel on the Middle East.

The specter of a possible clash between Tel Aviv and Tehran has been conjured up, after some weeks of litany-chanting by the Tel Aviv officials. This is testimony to the preceding statement.

On the other hand, coinciding with Christopher's presence in the Arab-Israeli conflict, Washington's brokers and military advisers are stirring up new developments in the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent.

This week, an American military delegation signed an agreement in Islamabad for arms sales. After a prolonged period of stagnation in Islamabad-Washington's political-military relations, the mired agreements were again approved by the military officials of the two countries. In addition, the friendly relations between the two governments have affected Pakistan's turbulent neighbor, Afghanistan, as well.

In Afghanistan, the advisers of the United States and Pakistan entered the Provinces of Qandahar and Helmand initially to ensure the safety of commercial routes and to combat drug smuggling. Subsequently, their actual plan, based on the creation of the impromptu Taleban group, was implemented, which served to further complicate the events in Afghanistan.

On the basis of the above plan, in the month of Mordad [23 July-22 August] this year, a meeting will be held with the participation of relatively neutral Afghan personalities and some former communists as well. Mahmud Mestiri [UN special emissary on Afghanistan] had participated in the session in Quetta earlier.

As a result of this session, the Taleban movement was formed with financial support from the United States

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and Afghanistan and under the supervision of an eight-member council consisting of six Pakistanis and two Americans. The former communist military forces assumed the task of their military training.

Washington's main objectives in the establishment of the Taleban movement were to eliminate the monopoly of Central Asia's access to free international waters through Iran, the establishment of a largely anti-Iranian government along Iran's borders, and ultimately, another plan for combating fundamentalism in the region.

Unfortunately, the first phase of the above objectives was in harmony with Pakistan's aim of changing the above trade routes or at least sharing them. Therefore, this brought about tactical [preceding word in English] convergence between Islamabad and Washington.

The first result of the aforementioned moves was the escalation of tension and fratricide in Afghanistan which generated misunderstanding among regional governments. This is the main objective that the powers of world arrogance have consistently pursued in crisis-ridden regions.

This is their eternal policy but it is still ambiguous why some governments sacrifice the atmosphere of friendship in the region for such plots?!

Anti-Kurd Strike in North Iraq Said Planned

MM2703081095 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 Mar 95 p 1

[Report by 'Ali Nur Zadah: "Iran Considering Operation Against Kurds in Northern Iraq"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London—Informed sources expect an Iranian operation against Iranian Kurds in northern Iraq similar to what Ankara is currently doing against the Turkish Kurds. According to the Iranian sources, Turkey informed Iran of its plan to storm northern Iraq 48 hours before the operation was mounted. The sources say that the Iranian National Security Council, which includes the heads of the three forces as well as military and security commanders in Iran, discussed at its meeting early this week the Turkish message received by the Iranian assistant interior minister and member of the joint security committee from his Turkish counterpart.

Informed sources say that the Iranian leadership approved of the Turkish plan provided the operations were kept out of the border triangle which is at the heart of greater Kurdistan and which links Iraq, Iran, and Turkey.

On the second day of the operations Turkish President Suleyman Demirel telephoned Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. According to the sources, Demirel reassured the Iranian president about the aim of the Turkish Army's operations and assured him that the Turkish Army would only remain on Iraqi territory for a limited period.

In another development, a source close to the Iranian opposition Kurdish Democratic Party has stated that Iran has amassed several Revolutionary Guard military divisions, commandos, and special units in an area adjacent to al-Sulaymaniyah Province and the areas of Hajj 'Imran and Sayyid Sadiq. The Kurdish source's statement coincided with reports indicating that the Iranian leadership is currently considering the possibility of launching a lightning military attack on the concentration points of the Peshmerga forces of the Iranian Kurdish Democratic Party and the party's transmitter in Kurdish areas in northern Iraq, exploiting the deteriorating political and security situation as a result of the Turkish invasion.

In a related development, the Iraqi Broadcasting Corporation attached to the Iraqi National Congress, says that the Turkish forces in northern Iraq are using one of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's palaces as headquarters for its operations, and that the palace was situated in the area of Sarsank northeast of Dahuk.

That palace was built in 1990 and was only used once by the Iraqi president before his forces invaded Kuwait. After the uprising which followed the defeat of the Iraqi forces in Kuwait the Kurds seized the palace and for a while it became a haven for refugees fleeing the Iraqi Army's attacks on the Kurds.

Turkey, Iraq Said Cooperating To Crush Kurds

LD2603133495 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] With the lapse of one week since the entry of the Turkish army in north Iraq, Turkish prime minister, Tansu Ciller, in a message addressed to her people, said the army will leave north Iraq after wiping out the dissidents.

This is at a time when there are no signs yet of the success of the 35,000-strong Turkish forces in the Iraqi Kurdistan. The Turkish troops have described the casualties suffered by the guerrillas of the Kurdistan Workers Party, PKK—for crushing whom they have entered the Iraqi territory—at about 170. This figure is negligible as compared to the personnel and military equipment deployed in the operations.

Also the comments of Turkish President Suleyman Demirel about the stay of the Turkish army in north Iraq for one year, have added to the concern of political circles.

Observers say that if all the PKK bases inside Iraqi Kurdistan have been annihilated, as claimed by the Turkish army, then there is no need for any further stay of the Turkish militarymen in that region. However, political observers, based on identical claims made by

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Ankara on demolishing the bases of the dissident guerrillas during attacks in previous years, do not take this report as serious. But these observers consider the Turkish army attack against north Iraq as a threat to the territorial integrity of Iraq. International circles and various governments, in the region and the world too, have expressed concern over the matter. However, the Turkish prime minister, in her message of March 25th, has tried to give reassurance on the territorial integrity of Iraq.

Some analysts' view of the comments made by the Iraqi ambassador in Ankara, Thursday March 23rd, also speak of the chances of cooperation between these two governments in crushing the Kurds. In his comments, he called for cooperation between Baghdad and Ankara for resolving the Kurdish problem in both Iraq and Turkey.

In the past too, the Iraqi Government had conflict with the Kurds in Iraq and after the oil war of 1991 Baghdad lost control of the Kurdish populated regions of north Iraq.

In this regard, Ankara contends that lack of control of Iraq's central government over north Iraq has considerably spurred the activities of the dissident Turkish guerrillas against the Turkish government in that region.

Experts believe that unsuccessful assaults of the Turkish army against north Iraq in previous years and continued fighting of the army against the guerrillas affiliated with the PKK inside Turkey show that the bloodbath can be terminated only through holding constructive talks between the two sides.

Turkish Operation in Northern Iraq Criticized

LD2403144195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 23 Mar 95

[Unattributed Commentary: "Iraq's Protest To The Turkish Offensive"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The official Iraqi news agency, quoting the spokesman of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry, on Wednesday, March 22d, said: Iraq views the Turkish army operations as a violation of its sovereignty and while expressing concern over the Turkish forces' offensive protests against this act. He also noted: The Turkish troops on the pretext of hunting certain individuals accused of endangering Turkey's internal security, have crossed into Iraq and advanced 40 kms south into Iraqi territory. The Iraqi Foreign Ministry spokesman added: Such issues as the Turkish offensive against the Kurds of northern Iraq threaten the security of both countries besides entailing the sufferings of the Kurds and U.S. interference in the regional affairs. Therefore Iraq demands the simultaneous withdrawal of the Turkish army and the immediate cessation of U.S. intervention.

The comments of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry spokesman are the first reaction of Baghdad since the Turkish army onslaught began against northern Iraq three days ago. These offensives are rated as the biggest operations of the Turkish army against the positions of the dissident Kurd guerrillas in northern Iraq. The Turkish army with 35,000 personnel supported by the Turkish airforce has entered northern Iraq in the oil-rich Kirkuk region. Ankara has described the main objectives behind these operations, which are continuing over a large area, as the annihilation of nearly 3,000 Kurd guerrillas who are stationed in that region. The Turkish army command, too, on Wednesday confirmed in Diarbakir, that more than 2,000 rebels from the Kurdistan Workers Party, known as the PKK, have been killed in the ongoing Turkish operations in northern Iraq and the bodies of 89 of them recovered. The command put the number of the Turkish army casualties in these operations as 13.

The Turkish army offensive, using a large number of troops, can have numerous aspects. Turkey believes that the invasion is taking place within the framework of the agreement signed by it with Baghdad. Under the agreement the military forces of Turkey and Iraq can enter one another's soil in pursuit of their dissidents. Even though in the opinion of political observers there exists a rift between America and Europe over the Turkish raid against northern Iraq, it is also probable that America, by encouraging Ankara to invade northern Iraq, is seeking to annihilate the dissident forces in Turkey and is indirectly bringing greater pressure on the Baghdad regime.

'Aggression' Said To Serve U.S., Zionism

NC2503190095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 25 Mar 95

[Commentary by the station "political analyst"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] There have been further European reactions to the Turkish intervention in northern Iraq. Germany and France said the Turkish military attack, which is supported by aircraft, artillery, and tanks, cannot be explained as aiming to annihilate the bases of the Kurdish opposition to the Ankara government, represented by the Kurdistan Workers Party. [passage omitted]

Political analysts believe that the large-scale Turkish military moves are aimed at covering up the worsening security situation in Turkey. The Alawite sect staged huge demonstrations a few weeks ago against sectarian and national discrimination. The Alawites, estimated at 20 million people, are being discriminated against. The Ankara government treats them as second-class citizens; their living standards are very low, and they are deprived of many educational and medical rights. Add to this Ankara's ambitions in the oil-rich city of Karkuk, which is not new to the states of the region.

What is strange, however, is that the major Turkish offensive happened right before the eyes and ears of the United States, which showed no unfavorable reaction to an aggression on the territory of another country. In fact, the Turkish intervention enjoyed America's blessing, as

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it serves objectives desired by Washington: imposing its hegemony over the region and shaking stability therein in a manner that achieves U.S. ambitions.

The countries of the region believe that any military operation against neighboring countries, no matter what excuses are given to justify it, will only bring tension, instability, and insecurity to the region, and will only benefit the enemies of these countries, particularly the United States and Zionism.

Tehran Sees 'Turning Point' in Events in Algeria

NC2703060195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 27 Mar 95

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Incoming reports from Algeria say the civil war is worse than ever and heavy fighting is continuing between the people and the coupist forces. The latest reports indicate that during the recent battles the military regime again used its air force to bomb the positions of the revolutionary Muslims, something that shows the battles are heightening in this Muslim country of North Africa. [passage omitted]

The recent battles show that Algeria's Muslim combatants are determined to end the coupist rule in Algeria and have thus chosen a new tactic. The Algerian combatants' attacks on state forces have been in the form of surprise attacks. Now the facts show that things have changed and overt and regular attacks have started. This change of tactics is considered to be an inevitable phase in Algeria's second revolution and a development in the country that will have significant repercussions.

Thus the ruling regime's efforts to mislead the public by using political maneuvers are being thwarted, and the joint plot by the coupist regime and the West against the Algerian people is losing its luster. The Algerian regime and the Western governments have always accused the Muslim revolutionaries of terrorism to decrease their popularity among the people at home and abroad. But with the general public's entry on the scene and with the war in Algeria becoming overt, this ploy by the coupists and their Western mentors has been neutralized. This is why experts refer to the recent developments in Algeria as a turning point that will most probably lead the country to the only path that will end the deadlock in the crisis.

Warning Against 'American' Government in Afghanistan

NC2303135995 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 15 Mar 95 pp 1, 13

[Editorial: "Sensitive Days in Afghanistan; the Responsibility of Regional Countries"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Our eastern neighbor Afghanistan is living through sensitive days. The people there are witnessing more bloodshed, murders, and plunder. More is being sacrificed each day in the power struggle and grudges are growing deeper. And as long as this continues the larger the gap among the political factions and the ethnic groups will grow, creating better ground for the colonialist powers to exploit the situation.

Despite its peace-seeking and justice-seeking claims, the newly emerged Taleban Group has shown its bloodthirsty and power-hungry face. The martyring of 'Abd ol-'Ali Mazari, the leader of the Islamic Unity Party, when he was being held captive by the Taleban Group is a big scourge on this group that claims to support Islam. The killing of a captive is a very clear example of a "war crime" and, by perpetrating this crime, the Taleban Group has written a black page in its brief history.

It is clear that the new phase of developments in Afghanistan—as was the case two years ago—will yield no positive results and that the outstanding characteristic of this phase is the thirst for power of the political factions. Unfortunately, this thirst among the newly emerged factions is so great that they consider resorting to any crime and will violate every ethical and religious law in their way. This is the characteristic of power-hungry elements that lack identity and are subservient, and this is why we should accept that the Afghan nation is now in one of its most sensitive periods.

The sensitivity of the situation in Afghanistan should be considered by the regional countries, especially by the heads of the ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] members meeting in Islamabad. Each one of these leaders might see developments in Afghanistan from a different angle depending on his country's interests. But the truth is that if the current instability, bloodshed, and power struggle lead to an American government in Afghanistan, it will harm the region in general. All the regional countries are responsible in front of the oppressed Afghan nation and for events in that oppressed country. Their greatest responsibility is to exert every effort for peace and stability under the aegis of an independent, popular, and Islamic government in Afghanistan. This objective can be achieved only by confronting the greed of foreigners and by preventing America from infiltrating Afghanistan.

Foreign Minister Velayati Starts Asian Tour

LD2703055495 Tehran IRNA in English 0534 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA—Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati left for China Sunday [26 March] night on the first leg of his four-nation Asian tour which will also take him to Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia.

Upon his departure at Mehrabad airport he told reporters that matters of mutual interest as well as

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international developments will be discussed during his 10-day official trip to the four countries.

Referring to Tehran-Beijing friendly relations, Velayati remarked that cooperation between the two republics had always been on an upward trend.

Commenting on relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Thailand, the foreign minister said that the long-standing ties between the two countries were further promoted in the past two years.

He underlined close cooperation with Malaysia as a Muslim state and said that the ties had been further cemented after the crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Larijani Writes on Spread of Sectarianism

NC2403171495 Tehran RESALAT in Persian
16 Mar 95 pp 1, 16

[Editorial by Dr. Mohammad Javad Larijani, deputy chairman of the Majles foreign policy committee, member of the Supreme National Security Council, and head of the Majles research center: "Liberal Terrorism"]

[FBIS Translated Text] 1. The events that are taking place around Iran can be considered very important and significant: The killing of Shiites in the mosques and other parts of Pakistan, especially in Karachi, the violent suppression of Shiites in Bahrain, the massacre of Shiites in Kabul, and finally the carnage of Alawites in Istanbul! I have no doubt that the above incidents are part of a plot which targets not only Islamic Iran, but Pakistan and Turkey as well.

2. That which concerns Islamic Iran is extremely clear and obvious: A terrorist approach to the Shiites in the countries neighboring Iran can on the one hand metamorphose into a more extensive Shiite-Sunni conflict and on the other, it will naturally be a source of annoyance for Iran. In any case, it will cast aspersions on the superlative relations that Iran has with its neighbors.

Perhaps the formulators of this plot had envisaged that the profound effect of the Islamic Revolution on the Islamic ummah should be stemmed in one way or another. Accordingly, sectarian clashes would undermine the extent of the acceptance of the message of the revolution in the minds of our Sunni brothers! Of course, right at the outset of the victory in Iran, the West made a major investment on the issue of his eminence the imam (may God be pleased with him) and the Iranian people being Shiites but this yielded no results!

This is because the actual message of the Islamic Revolution in Iran and its path in practice is precisely rooted in those teachings on which both sides concur. Therefore, in Egypt, occupied Palestine, and Algeria, right up to Tajikistan and Chechnya, we perceive one slogan, one focus, and one movement.

3. The plot is not directed only toward Iran. Turkey and Pakistan are targeted as well. However, in Pakistan, the United States is overtly pursuing the undermining of the government and wishes to deal only with beleaguered Islamabad. There is no doubt that peace and stability in Pakistan will result in strengthening Islam in the region and in the world. Therefore, pressure from all sides is being exerted on Pakistan.

The Pakistani Air Force is experiencing problems due to Washington's refusal to deliver ordered and paid-for components. The issue of Pakistan's nuclear resources is also under the microscope. The important question is: What is the United States expecting to gain from the situation in Pakistan?

4. The issue pertaining to Turkey also has a special meaning: Europe and the United States have deep concern regarding Turkey's political future! Turkey is a NATO member and in practice, NATO is seeking to redefine itself so that two major elements are incorporated: tackling regional tensions and combating fundamentalism!

On the other hand,, Turkey has been waiting outside the doors of the European Common Market for a long time though it seems to fulfill all the requisite criteria for membership: a democratically elected secular system, and excessive or one may say radical liberalism! [preceding two words in English]

For both of the aforementioned concepts, the role of Muslim forces is extremely fateful. Will the Welfare Party become so strong that, for example, it will be able to take power in its hands? If is does, will the Turkish Government be able to remain in NATO and assume responsibility for combating what the West terms fundamentalism? I have no doubts that the answers in both instances will be negative! In such a case, what should be done? A satanic response would be: "Let us create unrest in Turkey! so that its normalcy should be disrupted and a pretext for halting the natural political course of that country can be created!"

It is not important for the West what effect this will have on Turkey's economy, on its political system, and what the people will suffer as a result. What is important is that the West's concerns should be reduced!

5. What are our vital interests in this regard? In my opinion we should adopt a clear and calculated policy and most important of all, it must be "coordinated with our neighbors:"

First: The stability, security, and development of Turkey and Pakistan is of vital importance to us. Therefore, all kinds of unrest or the insecurity that prevails will also be considered a threat to us.

Second: We support the democratization of the political systems of the regional countries on principle (as it entails the people's participation and it is also to our advantage politically as it ensures the independence of the country).

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Third: The Islamic Republic of Iran should strongly condemn the terrorist policies against our brother countries in the region and should in practice help them combat this state of affairs as far as possible. The deep ideological influence of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its moral support can certainly be effective in defusing the situation.

Fourth: The current developments should drive home an important lesson to our brother countries and that is: non-dependence on the West or on its promises. Our future lies in regional cooperation and nothing else! We must have faith in this precept.

Fifth: It is the natural expectation of our country and nation, in fact of the entire Islamic ummah, that a categorical approach will be adopted toward the eradication of the actual agents of plots and crimes. For example, the Sipah-e Sahaba [Wahhabi group allegedly backed by Saudi Arabia] in Pakistan is without any doubt considered the fifth column in the ranks of Muslims. The leaders of this corrupt group are the enemies of God and the Prophet and are responsible for shedding the blood of innocent persons. They should be treated as the 'corrupt on earth'; otherwise, the social and political security and safety of the region would be threatened.

Pakistan

Official Says Arrested Suspect 'Not Aimal Kansi'

BK2503105495 Karachi DAWN in English 22 Mar 95 p 12

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Quetta, March 22: The suspect arrested by the FIA [Federal Investigation Agency]/FBI team in Quetta on Monday [20 March] last and flown to Islamabad was not Aimal Kansi, who is wanted for the killing of the two CIA agents, a senior government official said here on Wednesday.

Only one suspect was arrested when the joint team of FIA and FBI officials conducted a raid in this provincial capital along with deputy commissioner Quetta, he told Dawn.

"I cannot disclose the name of the suspect allegedly having links with Ramzi Yusuf and his accomplices", senior official said.

However, another source identified him as Haji Akhtar Mohammad Barriech who is a Pakistani national. Soon after his arrest he was taken to Islamabad in a special C-130 military transport plane for questioning. He was produced before a local magistrate and remanded in custody, these sources said.

Haji Akhtar Mohammad Barriech has eight children, six sons and two daughters. The eldest son is 16 years old and the youngest only three years. He is in his early 50s. He has performed Haj and, besides Saudi Arabia, he never visited any other country, his family sources told Dawn.

His relatives claimed that the FIA/FBI sleuths searched the house of Akhtar Mohammad. "The investigators found no evidence as he was an ordinary, simple and semiliterate man," his relatives went on saying. Akhtar is running his firewood stall in a Quetta locality.

Official sources confirmed his alleged links with the Ramzi Yusuf gang responsible for bombing the World Trade Centre in new York in which six persons were killed and more than one thousand injured.

Akhtar Mohammad was caught from a firewood stall on the Western Bypass of Quetta City as the security officials were keeping a surveillance on him.

The security operation was conducted by the Federal Police. An FBI agent too was in this provincial capital for a day or two supervising the planned arrest by FIA. He was staying at a local hotel in the Cantonment area avoiding disclosure of his identity by keeping himself far away from the hectic activities of the local and lone Five Star Hotel in the heart of the city.

However, the FBI took the local deputy commissioner and the Provincial Government into confidence avoiding a criticism on the operation. During raids in search of Aimal Kansi, the alleged killer of two CIA agents in the United States, in Quetta caused massive uproar as most of the raids were conducted without taking the Provincial Government and its officials into confidence.

Reliable reports said that the security officials also conducted another raid at a house in Satellite Township in the outskirts of Quetta where a relative of Ramzi Yusuf was said to be residing. When the raid was conducted, no one was arrested. Most of the foreigners, mainly Afghans, Iranians, and Kurd refugees are residing in the same locality which was raided on Monday.

The security officials from the Federal Capital have brought a man with them for identifying the places and people having links with Ramzi Yusuf's gang. The man was reported to be among those six persons rounded up in a security operations by Pakistani authorities in Peshawar following questioning of Ramzi Yusuf in the United States. Most of the clues were provided by the FBI agents to the Pakistani security officials.

Police Link Ramzi to 1994 Iranian Bombing

BK2603092895 Hong Kong AFP in English 0709 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi, March 26 (AFP)—The man accused of masterminding the 1993 bombing of New York's World Trade Center (WTC) may have carried out a similar attack in Iran last year that killed 25, a police report said.

Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf, 27, was extradited from Pakistan to the United States last month on suspicion of invovement in the WTC bombing.

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Pakistan police arrested six men—two Pakistani, three Sudanese and one possibly Iranian—in Peshawar earlier this [month] who they say are Ramzi's associates.

One of the two Pakistanis detained, Abdul Shakoor, implicated Ramzi in a bombing in the Iranian city of Mashad, according to an interrogation report obtained by AFP.

The June 20, 1994 attack on the mausoleum of Imam Reza left 25 people dead and 70 injured. Iran blamed the opposition Mujahideen group for the attack

Shakoor told police Ramzi's brother, Abdul Muneem, told him that Ramzi "was responsible for that (Mashad) blast".

Police said no further details were available.

Two more men, believed to be Ramzi's associates, have been detained in Karachi this week, police said.

The two men, Arif Tajjak and Hafiz Dur Mohammed, were taken in for questioning after being implicated by Shakoor in terrorist activities in Karachi.

Officials Report 1994 Attempt on Bhutto's Life

BK2503103595 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 25 Mar 95 p 12

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad: Having failed to eliminate Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in 1993, the group after her life masterminded another assassination attempt on her life in the last week of December 1994, senior government officials confirmed to The News.

She was to be targeted in the Nursery Area in Karachi where she reached December 24 after President Farooq Leghari held marathon session with MQM leadership that was about to enter into an accord for cooperation with the government.

"We are trying to collect details to find out who the group people are and who was assigned what for the life attempt on the prime minister," Interior Minister Nasirullah Babar confirmed. But he didn't elaborate the recently unearthed attempt on the premier.

General Babar, however, confirmed that a top level inquiry, according to procedure, had been initiated to ascertain more facts about the conspiracy.

On March 18, Ms Bhutto had herself told a foreign news agency that extradited bomb plot suspect Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf had tried to kill her in 1993. "He had come with explosives in a car towards the Bilawal House Karachi," she had said.

Well-informed sources said the authority conducting inquiry into the new disclosure has not establish so far whether or not the group that masterminded life attempt on Ms Bhutto in December had any connections with Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf.

The conspiracy seemingly became unearthed after the recent arrests of six alleged accomplices of Ramzi Yusuf, two of whom have been arrested in Islamabad while other from Quetta and various parts of the country.

But the cautious interior minister did not immediately commit that the mastermind behind the latest plot had something to do with Ramzi group. "You see, I don't speculate," Babar observed when asked to comment on the possible liaison of the two.

What the member of premier's kitchen cabinet said bespoke of a tip, possibly written information, on the assassination attempt on Benazir Bhutto. He would not, however, disclose the source, insisting on the sensitivity of the matter.

Nor did the Interior Minister want to give any details of how the attempt was foiled or what exactly happened. Or whether the government had any clues as to who were the people involved.

Article Links Ramzi, Other 'Terrorists'

BK2703074095 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 27 Mar 95 pp 1, 10

[Article by Kamran Khan: "Ramzi's Terror Network"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi: Pakistani authorities investigating the connections and network of the dreaded terrorist Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf have discovered that Ramzi and his organisation, from their base in Pakistan, had master-minded some of the most horrifying acts of terrorism that jolted the governments of the United States, Saudi Arabia and Iran in the past two years, high ranking government of Pakistan officials confirmed to The News.

Pakistani investigators are currently sharing some of this information with the United States through the visiting Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) experts, but the governments of Iran and Saudi Arabia are yet to be sounded about the clues found in Pakistan regarding cases of terrorism in those two friendly countries. This was disclosed in background interviews with informed officials.

Independent confirmation is also now available that in September of 1993, only seven months after he bad bombed the World Trade Center in New York city, Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf along with two Pakistani and a Sandi national had plotted to kill Ms. Benazir Bhutto by planting an explosive device in a manhold leading to her Bilawal House residence. The plan was aborted when Ramzi mishandled the explosive while manufacturing the device and caused injuries to his hands and left eye.

The news has learned on authority that information about Ramzi's role in an abortive attempt to murder Ms. Bhutto and his connections in Pakistan, appeared during the interrogation in Peshawar of 24- year old Abdul Shakoor, a religous fanatic residing in Lyari in Karachi.

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Abdul Shakoor had been arrested by the Railway Police while boarding a Karachi-bound train with baggage that contained explosives and agrenades.

Investigators have identified Abdul Shakoor as an important Pakistani associate of Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf. Shakoor's disclosure about Ramzi's attempt to kill Ms. Bhutto was first revealed by the Prime Minister herself in a hurriedly granted interview to the REUTER correspondent in Islamabad last week. But, what the prime minister or any other senior Pakistani official did not disclose was even more interesting.

Abdul Shakoor, who according to the investigators, had intimate contacts with Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf, told his interrogators that Ramzi also had strong connections in Iran and he was responsible for the June 20, 1994 massive bomb explosion at the shrine of Imam Ali Reza (A.S.) in Mashhad. At least 70 people died and about 200 were wounded when a powerful bomb exploded in the crowded shrine on Ashura last year.

The explosion, that had extensively damaged the holy shrine, had triggered a wave of shock and anger throughout the Shia World. The Iranian Government had earlier held the revel Mujahideen-e-Khaig group responsible for the explosion. Some analysts suspect Ramzi's connection with the Mujahideen-e-Khalq because of his Iraqi background.

Independent reports suggested that in Moharram last year Ramzi travelled to Iran via Turbat in Balochistan. One Abdul Muqeem, another long time resident of Karachi and identified as a brother of Ramzi, had also spoken about Ramzi's involvement in the bomb blast at Mashhad.

Ramzi is understood to have strong connections in the Pakistani and Iranian sides of Balochistan. Incidentally Quetta was the immediate destination of both Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf and Aimal Kansi after they carried out the sensational cases of terrorism on American soil in the space of three weeks in February of 1993.

Ramzi hated Shias," said a person who had met him in Karachi in 1993 and had deep ties with the people close to the mysterious terrorist. According to the investigators Abdul Shakoor his arrested associate—shared with Ramzi, besides a Middle Eastern origin, some very strong anti-Shia feelings. Authorities said that Abdul Shakoor was also an active worker of Sipahe Sahaba and during his interrogation provided interesting details that showed that Ramzi also had some ties with that organisation.

"The reason Ramzi wanted to kill Benazir Bhutto was not only that he could not see a woman becoming the head of state in a Islamic country," Shakoor told a joint interrogation team of ISI [Inter Service Intelligence], IB [Intelligence Bureau] and Special Branch officials in Peshawar," Ramzi thought of killing Ms. Bhutto because he was told that the PPP government (1988-90) had authorised the assassination of Haq Nawaz Jhangvi, the founder president of Sipahe Sahaba.

Last year Ramzi's associates in Karachi were given the task to murder Maulana Salim Qadri, the Chief of the Sunni Tehrik, an organisation of moderate Sunnis from the Barelvi school of thought. Several important characters of this conspiracy were arrested in Karachi last week.

Pakistani investigators are now sure of Ramzi's ties with the Sipahe Sahaba. These ties flourished mostly in the military training camps inside Afghanistan designated for Arabs and Pakistanis. Orthodox Sunni religious schools in Pakistan serve as feeders for these military training camps. Beside Shakoor, investigators believed that one Abdul Wahab, owner of Junaid Bakery in the Lyari area of Karachi and the unit in charge of Sipahe Sahaba in the Chakiwarah, neighbourhood of Karachi, was another close associate of Ramzi. Raids to arrest Abdul Wahab in Karachi remained unsuccessful.

The wide ranging country-wide probe into the connections of Ramzi Yusuf unvelled another dangerous face of the most intriguing terrorist of our time. Strong evidence has surfaced that suggested Ramzi Yusuf also ran a network of Saudi nationals committed to destabilise the Royal family in that country. There is no evidence available to suggest that the Sipahe Sahaba was in any way aware of Ramzi's anti-kingdom operations inside Saudi Arabia.

A nation-wide hunt is currently on to trace one Munir Madni, a suspected Saudi national and a resident of Bahadurabad in Karachi. Evidence confirmed that Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf, through Munir Madni had established a front import-export company that used to get a gift of "Aabe Zam Zan" [holy water from Mecca] from Saudi Arabia worth many millions of rupees. At one point last year the same front company generated about Rs. 7 million by selling the Holy Water. The money was later used by Ramzi Yusuf to finance Saudi extremist groups.

A highly informed source connected with a large Pakistani Islamic organisation said that in the middle of last year, a group of Saudis had visted Pakistan as the guest of that organisation and sought political and material support for their campaign inside the kingdom. The source said that the group, during that visit, was provided apparatus and technical knowledge to install transmitters to relay radio broadcasts from a secret location inside Saudi Arabia. Several members of that Saudi group had participated in the Afghan Jehad against the communists.

Officials said that acts of violence committed by these groups inside Saudi Arabia are not known to the outside world. The official investigation has also revealed that dozens of Saudis committed to Jehad all over the world have been visiting the military training camps inside Afghanistan. "These training camps are ideal places to rub shoulders with persons like Ramzi and to learn from

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his experience," said an official, who believed that Ramzi's colleagues in Pakistan and Afghanistan were still busy in fuelling unrest in the Kingdom.

Sources estimated that at least 2,000 persons, mostly Pakistanis and Arabs of different nationalities are currently engaged in military training in those camps for Jehad in Kashmir and elsewhere in the world.

These sources estimated that since the expulsion of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, at least 10,000 Pakistanis belonging to the Islamic parties such as Jamaat-i-Islami, Harkatul Ansar, Markaz Dawatul Irshad, Jamiat Ulmae Islam have acquired training in making bombs, hurling grenades, firing from light and heavy weapons and in laying mines.

Abdul Shakoor, who himself was associated with a military training camp ran by a Palestinian by the name of Abu Mahaz and a Pakistani named Commander Taslim near Kabul, stunned his interrogators by disclosing that his camp also provided training for hijacking. This was the first time that such a claim was made, but it was not confirmed independently.

Incidentally, none of more than two dozen suspects questioned by the authorities in connection with Ramzi Yusuf all over the country this month had any knowledge of Ramzi's United States network and operations. In New York City Ramzi along with 11 other Arabs, all having one or another Pakistani or Afghan connecton, is currently facing multiple charges of terrorism. Ramzi is considered the mastermind behind the attempt to bomb the World Trade Center.

He is also accused of planning to plant bombs at peak hours in the crowded Holland and Lincoln tunneis that connect New York City with the state of New Jersey.

There is still no evidence to suggest that Ramzi was in any way connected with the military training of 16 Muslin African-Americans at the training site designated for the Mujahideen of Harkatul Ansar, inside Afghanistan. Harkatul Ansar and all other militant organisations committed to Islamic Jehad all over the world have acknowledged sending their guerrillas to Tajikistan, Bosnia, Chechnya, Philippines, Burma and occupied Kashmir.

Jamaat-i-Islami, Harkatul Ansar and other organisations have never been challenged by the government in their campaigns to recruit committed Muslims to carry out jehad anywhere in the world. These organisations are also permitted to collect Jehad funds anywhere in the country. In its most recent fund collection campaign all over the country Jamaat-i-Islami reportedly collected more than Rs 20 million during the Eid prayers early this month.

As the Pakistani investigators gather inteligence on Ramzi's group and other terrorist networks operating out of Pakistn, they were unsure how far they could go in challenging and uprooting the organisations committed to Holy war wherever Muslims are persecuted or suppressed in the world. What worries the Benazir Bhutto administration is the solid fact that most of these organisations are also taking an active part in the military struggle to liberate Kashmir.

"No government can afford to take the risk of launching a crackdown against those challenging the Indian military suppression inside Kashmir," said a high ranking security official who added that the top government authorities have already been informed about the serious dangers that lay behind any crackdown against the militant organisations. He, however, said that the recent information that some of these groups were directly or indirectly responsible for creating unrest in friendly states such as Saudi Arabia and Iran may add pressure on Islamabad to do something really serious to counter this international challenge to Pakistan.

Bhutto Reaffirms 'No Compromise' With 'Terrorists'

BK2603103795 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has reaffirmed that there will be no compromise with terrorists as politics and terrorism cannot go together. Talking to newsmen in Rawalpindi yesterday, she said that the government cannot forgive those who are involved in bombing sacred places like mosques and engage in other terrorist activities. The prime minister said that it is the primary duty of political parties to expel any elements from their parties involved in terrorism. She said if any political party wants to enter into any sort of agreement with the government, then it should first of all control its terrorists.

Turning to her government's socioeconomic development program, the prime minister said that some elements do not want to see the country develop and are trying to create problems on one pretext or the other. The strike call is another example. She said the government has initiated a process of electrification for all the villages and it will extend basic amenities to the rural population. The facility of gas is also being provided to more and more areas of the country.

Benazir Bhutto said that the present era is one involving the promotion of trade and investment and Pakistan is trying to attract foreign investment to achieve development and prosperity. She said we have won the struggle for democracy and now we will realize the rights of the poor masses.

Referring to her foreign visits, the prime minister said they are mainly aimed at seeking the cooperation of friendly countries to accelerate the development process in Pakistan. She said she went to France to seek assistance for the installation of a telephone system to provide better telephone services to the people, and during

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her Singapore visit an agreement was signed on a highway project for Karachi costing $200 million.

TV Report Claims 'Terrorism' Work of Outsiders

MS2703161395 London BBC Television Network in English 2230 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Editorial Report] The BBC "Newsnight program at 2230 GMT on 24 Mar carries a nine minute report by David Loyn from Karachi on the growing terrorist problems in Pakistan.

The reports shows a man grieving over his son murdered at a massacre at a Mosque in which 15 people died, cutting to show injured adults and children being treated for their injuries, then shows leaders of the Sunni community arriving at a Shia Mosque to offer consolation and stand alongside men who they see as their Muslim brothers against attempts to divide them. the report then shows a Sunni Prayer Leader Salauddin Rahmani.

Rahmani speaks [with English translation]: "We don't have any idea who could be responsible for these acts, we only know that he is doing wrong, he is trying to create fences between the Muslims against the lesson of love which we have been taught." The report then shows Shia Prayer leader Husain Najasi.

Najasi speaks [with English translation]: "The only support for these killings come from people who do not want to see Muslims united."

The report then shows police guarding the Mosque that was attacked, then goes on to show Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto at a public gathering.

Loyn says: "The Prime Minister says the Western world has a long-term responsibility for the chaos in Karachi after arming Islamic fighters against Communism in neighboring Afghanistan.

Bhutto says: "[Words indistinct] at the time of the Afghan war, the time the West landed over here and helped create holy warriors who's job it was to go into Afghanistan and fight a holy war, and when that holy war ended the West packed it's bags and left, and it left countries like Pakistan, Egypt, Algeria and others to pick up the pieces."

The report continues with shots of computer generated pictures of suspected terrorists responsible for the bombing of the Sunni Mosque as well as the two Americans shot in a minibus. The video then shows a Shia leader, Allama Hassan Turabi, now in hiding.

Turabi speaks: [with English translation] "They want to finish the potential of Moslems. After the collapse of Russia only Islam can stand against America. They are afraid that if Sunni's and Shia's unite, they shall quicken the collapse of America."

The report then shows a harbor scene, then shows police gathering arms collected from killers, cutting to show Pakistani rangers going to the scene of a shooting, where the day before armed police killed a gang of 13 killers from the minority grouping of the MQM at their hideout following their own raid. The report goes on to show Farooq Sattar the leader of the MQM arriving at a provincial assembly.

Sattar speaks: "It is the obligation and the duty of the Government to apprehend those who are the real culprits, but they are giving them full patrionage, they are working and operating under the full connivance of the Government machinery, and the Government agencies.

The report goes on to show workshops and other local scenes, then shows men smoking pot, going on to show a meeting of businessmen. The report concludes with footage of police in training.

Editorial Rejects Idea of Kansi Extradition

BK2403130695 Lahore JANG in Urdu 23 Mar 95 p 3

[Editorial: "Seeking U.S. Help Against Extremism"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Describing Pakistan as a moderate democratic country, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said that she needs U.S. help to check the drug menace and terrorism. Talking to U.S. journalists based in Islamabad and giving an interview to Voice of America, the prime minister said that Pakistan is engaged in the process of eradicating the two evils, and it needs international assistance to achieve success in this endeavor. She said that her government has taken steps against religious extremism, and on this matter her government is unanimous with Washington, which is worried about international terrorism and Islamic extremism. The prime minister attributed these evils in Pakistan to the developments and factors during the Afghan war.

It is an undeniable fact that the heroin and Kalashnikov culture has developed in Pakistan as a result of the Afghan war. The United States and the Western world praised and supported Pakistan as long as it was resisting the Soviet aggression in Afghanistan and actively assisting the Afghan mojahedin. However, when the Soviet forces were withdrawn, Pakistan was left alone by the United States and the West to deal with the displeasing and negative effects of the Afghan war. Many Afghan, Pakistani, and Arab youths considered the Afghan war as a jihad and took part in it and underwent training. They played an important role in the defeat and disintegration of the Soviet Union. Many of these trained youths are now engaged in Pakistan and other Islamic countries in what they consider a jihad and struggle to uphold Islam. Unfortunately, it is due to the negative attitude of the United States and the West toward the Islamic world, which spawns extremism among Muslim youths, that they have become active against the West.

The United States has been pursuing a hostile stance toward Pakistan since 1990. Initially, it began exerting

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unilateral pressure on Pakistan against its nuclear program and then suspended military and economic aid under the Pressler Amendment. The negative attitude of the United States is spawning extremism in Pakistani society. The prime minister is fully justified in demanding that the United States strengthen its hand by scrapping the laws prejudicial to Pakistan and ending the ban on military and economic aid. By saying that the United States should help fight extremism, the prime minister might have meant that if the United States ends its prejudicial and unfair treatment of Pakistan then the elements encouraging extremism will have no justification to continue their activities. It would then, in fact, be tantamount to strengthening the prime minister's hand. However, the way in which the prime minister's argument has been reported in the media has created the misunderstanding that the prime minister has sought U.S. help in dealing with an internal situation in Pakistan. This is why people like Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan and Qazi Hussain Ahmad have expressed disapproval of the prime minister's statement. It would be appropriate if the prime minister herself explained her statement so that the impression, which is not totally correct, that she has invited the United States to either directly or indirectly interfere in Pakistan's internal affairs, is removed.

The prime minister had intended to say that the anti-U.S. quarters have justification to adopt an extremist approach due to the negative attitude being pursued by the United States toward Pakistan, suspension of military and economic aid to it, and the imposition of the Pressler Amendment. If the United States corrects its attitude, then it might help eliminate the anti-U.S. propaganda in Pakistan. If extremist tendencies do exist in Pakistan and remnants of the Afghan war are engaged in activities the government considers inappropriate, and the Government of Pakistan wants to check it, then it should do the job itself. Speaking of U.S. help in this context may create misunderstandings, which should be avoided.

The prime minister should also remove the impression that she is taking some extraordinary steps—steps that are contradictory to our national interests—before her U.S. trip to please the United States. Since the matter of Ramzi Yusuf's citizenship is not clear, and he is reported to be a Kuwaiti, or an Iraqi, or a resident of Balochistan; therefore, the decision to hand him over to the United States may be justified. However, Aimal Kansi or his accomplices should not be handed over to the United States, and they should be tried in Pakistani courts for whatever charges are outstanding against them. The global status of the United States cannot be denied; however, we should not do anything that creates an impression that we are ignoring the requirements of our national sovereignty to please the United States.

Editorial Notes Minister's Assurance on Extradition

BK2503123195 Islamabad PAKISTAN in Urdu 25 Mar 95 p 4

[Editorial: "No Pakistani Will Be Handed Over to Another Country"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Federal Interior Minister Major General, retired, Nasirullah Khan Babar has assured the Senate that no Pakistani will be handed over to another country to be punished for terrorism unless he is formally tried and his offense established. The minister was responding to remarks by Senators Hafiz Hussain Ahmad and Aftab Sheikh. They said that U.S. intelligence agency personnel along with their Pakistani counterparts arrested two persons in Balochistan and brought them to Islamabad. One of them is Aimal Kansi, who is accused of killing four CIA officers in Washington, and the other is Abdul Ghani, who is accused of circulating counterfeit currency notes. The interior minister did not mention the names of these two persons.

So far as the extradition of Ramzi Yusuf to the United States is concerned, he is not a Pakistani and is a resident of the Iranian side of Balochistan; he was born in Kuwait and has three citizenships and three passports. [sentence as published] He had made an attempt on the life of Prime Minister Bhutto in July 1993, but the bomb exploded in his hand, cutting his fingers and damaging one of his eyes. He was under treatment at Jinnah Postgraduate Hospital bearing the name of Azam Khan. The interior minister made it clear that no Pakistani will be handed over to any other country without the legal requirements being fulfilled.

Alleged Indian 'Terrorists' Arrested in Peshawar

BK2603104395 Islamabad PAKISTAN in Urdu 26 Mar 95 pp 1, 7

[Report by Peshawar Bureau]

[FBIS Translated Text] A group of Indian terrorists arrested at Peshawar Airport the other day has made sensational revelations and confessed to its close links with some important Pakistanis. The seven-member group led by Tufail Pandit and involved in terrorist activities in Karachi and Punjab was arrested in Peshawar a few days ago by an alert federal agency employee while the group was attempting to return to Karachi. Group members had fled to Punjab after one of their operations began in Karachi, but stern action by the Punjabi authorities forced them to continue on to Peshawar. During their 10 days there, they prepared new plans for terrorist activities in Karachi.

The terrorists are being interrogated, but their statements have not been disclosed by the investigators. Sources say that the name of the group's leader is Tufail Pandit, who is reported to have disclosed during the investigation that he received training in terrorism four years ago in Srinagar. Later, he received two years of training in Afghanistan. Sources say that the group leader has disclosed that they belong to an Islamic organization in India with headquarters in Srinagar, and are carrying out sabotage activities in Pakistan according to the direction of the Indian organization.

It has also been known that during the group's stay in Peshawar an important figure rented a bungalow for the

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group in the Phase III area of Hayatabad. The group has confessed to involvement in most of the terrorist activities in Karachi. Sources say that the United States has demanded that the group be handed over to the U.S. Government, but it is not known which case the United States is seeking extradition for.

Bhutto Cites Social Gains at Lunch for H. Clinton

BK2603114595 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto has said that Pakistan and the United States can work together to lead the world into a new era. She was speaking at a luncheon hosted by her for the visiting U.S. first lady, Mrs. Hillary Clinton, at the Prime Minister's House in Islamabad this afternoon. The luncheon was attended by prominent Pakistani women from all walks of national life, including social workers, human rights activists, and representatives of NGO's [nongovernment organizations].

The prime minister said since assuming office 17 months ago, her government launched a frontal assault on institutional discrimination against women in the society. Her government has guaranteed 10 percent jobs reserved for women in government services, established a Women Development Bank for small female entrepreneurs, appointed women jurists for the first time to superior courts, and established special women police stations for domestic violence directed against females. About the welfare of mother and child, the prime minister pointed out that the government plans to train 100,000 lady health workers to teach family planning and health care. She said this is just a beginning for a new Pakistan.

Pleads Kashmir Case in Meeting

BK2703101795 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 27 Mar 95 pp 1, 10

[Report by Shakil Shaikh]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Islamabad: Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto proved herself a tough pleader of a national cause whenever opportunity falls and she again did it Sunday [26 March] when she told US First lady Hillary Clinton that the core issue of Kashmir should be resolved under UN resolutions.

Availing the opportunity, the prime minister went an extra mile to apprise the US First Lady of two important issues: resolution of core issue of Kashmir between India and Pakistan; and the main irritants in the Pak-US relations—neither supplying the paid-for defence equipment, including crucial F-16s, nor returning the money.

Ms Bhutto raised these questions before Mrs Clinton in formal talks between the two held before the luncheon hosted by the former in honour of the visiting dignitary from Washington. Pakistan side was represented by Secretary Foreign Affairs Najamuddin Shaikh and Additional Secretary Agha Zafar Hilali while the US side comprised Ambassador John C Monjo and Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Robin Raphel. There were also some other low-level officials present there.

According to official sources, Ms Bhutto informed Mrs Clinton about the brutalities being unleashed on women in Indian held Kashmir and gross violations of human rights going on at the hands of Indian security forces. "There is a dire need to resolve this core issue of Kashmir between the two South Asian nations," stressed the premier.

Ms Bhutto indirectly sought Mrs Clinton's help to settle Pak-US issue pertaining to defence purchases. "Pressler has not served the purpose; its a blunt law and even Americans are now realizing that this law is a discriminatory piece of legislation which should go. The Clinton administration should either deliver the equipment or return the money paid for this equipment, which included purchases for three forces, "Bhutto told the US First Lady. [passage omitted]

While highly praising Mrs Clinton and her efforts for noble causes, Ms Bhutto termed her a great leader for the cause of health care and cause of children.

"I and the rest of the people of Pakistan have been utterly fascinated by the First Lady's heroic efforts to redefine the role of women in America, to substantively restructure the responsibilities of the office of First Lady, and to provide caring and sensitive leadership on the key social issues of the modern era."

She described Mrs Clinton as both tough and a great leader. "We too made a frontal assault on institutional discrimination against women in our society," the premier added.

Highlighting the steps her government had taken in different sectors of social welfare, the Prime Minister said, "We have guaranteed that at least ten percent of all federal bureaucratic jobs will be reserved for the women of Pakistan. And we have established a women's development bank for small female established a women's development bank for small female entrepreneurs, a bank run by women for women, where men can keep their money but cannot borrow".

She said we have established special women police stations which were staffed by women. And for the first time in the history of our nation, women jurists are being appointed to the higher courts in our land.

About the future plans of her governments, Ms Bhutto said her government plans to train a hundred thousand lady health workers to teach family planning and maternal health so that women can make the most fundamental choices of their lives for themselves, and this is just the beginning for a new Pakistan. [passage omitted]

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'Closer' Ties Hoped for After H. Clinton Visit

BK2603154895 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 26 Mar 95 p 6

[Editorial: "Hillary's Visit"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] American First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, currently on a two-day visit to Pakistan, has a multi-faceted personality which epitomises an admirable balance between her domestic responsibilities as a mother and a housewife and her public role as spouse of the US President. Born in 1947 in Chicago, Hillary Rodham Clinton was educated at such prestigious institutions as the Yale Law School and the Oxford University as a Rhodes scholar. From early youth, she has been associated with healthcare, housing and primary education projects, earning deep respect and admiration in her hometown Arkansas. She pioneered welfare projects like the Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families and the Home Instruction Programme for Pre-School Youth. She also served on the board of Arkansas Children's Hospital. In recognition of her professional and personal accomplishments, Hillary Rodham Clinton was named Arkansas Woman of the Year and Arkansas Mother of the Year in early 1980s. On the strength of her long experience in welfare and community work, President Clinton upon assuming the august office, appointed the first lady as head of his task force on national healthcare reform.

Unlike her many predecessors, Hillary Rodham Clinton wields considerable influence on the US policy-making process through being a close confident and trusted advisor of the president. That is why the Clinton White House has already had a distinct imprint of Hillary. Her choice of South Asia as the area of her itinerary reflects the deep interest she has in the region. Accompanied on her current tour by Assistant Secretary of State Robin Raphel, the American First Lady is scheduled to hold talks with Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on a variety of issues for forging closer Pakistan-US ties. The opportunity for the face to face dialogue between the American First Lady and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto is being billed in diplomatic circles as a ground-preparing exercise for the latter's forthcoming visit to the United States. Viewed in context of the important position she enjoys in the US decision-making process, her current visit to Pakistan symbolises the recent improvement in Pak-US ties following growing realisation among the Administration high-ups of the inherent injustice of discriminatory laws like the Pressler Amendment, the blanket application of which has proved to be patently counter-productive. American First Lady's visit to Pakistan will serve as a harbinger of closer and fruitful relations between Washington and Islamabad.

Editorial on Goals of Visit

BK2603085295 Islamabad THE NATION in English 26 Mar 95 p 6

[Editorial: "Mrs. Clinton's Visit"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton, the First Lady of the US, is on a two-day visit to Pakistan as part of a tour of some South Asian countries that will also take her to India and Sri Lanka. The visit has made many people wonder whether it is worth all the excitement that seems to have overtaken Islamabad. After all she holds no public office in her own right, and hence it is unrealistic to expect that she would be able to help resolve, that is if she so desires, the issues of contention which presently bedevil Pak-US relations. She would act according to her brief which, according to reports, is to stay clear of the problem areas and play just the role of a goodwill ambassador. Many Pakistanis who do not know much about Mrs. Clinton may like to compare her with Jacqueline Kennedy who came here some 33 years ago presenting a great image of glitter and glamour but little substance. The fact is that though Mrs. Clinton's interest in matters of appearance is relatively new and does not occupy as much of her time and attention as in the case of the famous Kennedy lady, in terms of intellectual ability, however, she is believed to be a heavyweight at par with her husband. By his own admission, President Bill Clinton relies heavily on the First Lady's opinion on all important issues and concerns facing his administration.

Hence, while in Pakistan, even though Mrs. Clinton may not evince much interest in policy issues, she is the ears and eyes of her husband. Whatever she hears and the impressions she gathers from her meetings with people here may eventually lead to influencing the President's opinion and US policy towards this country. In that context it is good to note that the people she is to meet in Islamabad and Lahore are not only government officials but a wide range of opinion leaders that include women, academics and journalists. These people might discuss issues of interest to her in a perspective that government leaders and officials might want to avoid. Since Mrs. Clinton's areas of interest include children and women's development as also the welfare of less affluent sections of society in her own country, on a personal level, the time she spends here may prove to be a particularly enlightening experience for her.

Leaders, Organizations Decide Not To Observe Strike

BK2503113095 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Leaders from various walks of life have criticized the strike called for today, and a number of organizations representing trade and industry have dissociated themselves from it. These include industrialists, businessmen, small traders, teachers, workers, and transporters. Addressing a public meeting organized by the Bus Service Transport Association in Karachi last evening, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Abdullah Shah expressed the government's firm belief in democracy and its protection. He said that those who have called the strike will be held responsible for any loss of life. Speaking on the occasion, the transporters announced their disassociation from the strike.

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A delegation of Traders Action Committee [TAC] in Peshawar led by its president Halim Jan called on the North-West Frontier Province [NWFP] Chief Minister Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao yesterday and apprised him of their problems. Referring to the demands of the traders, the chief minister announced the cancellation of the proposed model tax schedule and an immediate establishment of the TAC office in the city. The chief minister said that the system of collecting the tax on goods would be improved, keeping in view the proposals of the traders.

The administration and labor union of Karachi Port Trust have decided that the port operations will continue today and there will be no strike at the port. The president and vice president of Larkana Chamber of Commerce and Industry and trade organizations have announced that they will not take part in the strike, saying it will in no way help improve the Karachi situation. The chamber of commerce and industry of the NWFP has also announced that it will not observe the strike. In addition, the TAC of NWFP has declared that it has nothing to do with the strike.

'Partial Strike' Observed

BK2503115995 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Partial strike was observed in some parts of the country today in response to the call by the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry in protest against the law and order situation in Karachi. It may be recalled that the government had clearly declared the strike as illegal because it could harm the economy of the country. It had stated that all possible measures were being taken to improve the law and order situation and [deal with] terrorism in Karachi let loose by vested interests. Many trade, commerce and transport organizations had also bitterly opposed to strike call. No strike was observed in Peshawar, Dera Ismail Khan, Abbottabad, and other parts of the NWFP [North-West Frontier Province]. In some areas, a token strike was observed.

In Karachi, there was a partial strike with shopping centers by and large closed. Rail and air services operated normally. In Lahore, transport remained normal but business centers were partly closed. In Faisalabad, the strike was partial but industrial units remained in operation. The local chamber of commerce and industry also remained open. In Quetta also, there had been a partial strike. However, in the outskirts of the city life was normal. Transport in Quetta and other areas remained normal.

Partial strike was observed in Rawalpindi and Islamabad today in response to the strike call. In Islamabad, most of the shopping centers remained open and there was normal business. In Rawalpindi, some shops and markets were closed. However, public and private transport remained plying normally in the twin cities. Attendance in offices and educational institutions also remained normal. Local authorities adopted strict security measures to avoid any untoward incident.

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